

ALICE AND, BEATRICE





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The Old Woman showing how Lace is made.—Page 19.

ALICE

AND

BEATRICE.

BY GRANDMAMMA.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOHN ABSOLOM.



GRIFFITH AND FARRAN,

(Successors to Newbery and Harris,)

WEST CORNER ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD, LONDON. E. P. DUTTON & CO., NEW YORK.

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CHAPTER I.

VISIT TO GRANDMAMMA—WALKS TO THE SEA-SHORE—BATHING IN THE SEA.

LICE and Beatrice were two little girls of about four and six years of age. They were staying with their grandmamma. Alice and Beatrice were very glad to be with their grandmamma, for she lived in the country and near the sea. They liked to see the green fields, full of pretty flowers, and to play in the nice large garden, and to walk up and down the high hills that were on all sides the house, and also they liked to go to the sea-shore and look on the wide sea.

Grandmamma loved Alice and Beatrice very much, and she liked to have them with her, and she tried to make them good and happy. Every morning they said their prayers to her, and every evening before they went to bed; and they never forgot to thank God, who had taken care of them during the night, and to beg God to bless and take care of them, and all those they loved, that day and always. Little Beatrice could not say her prayers quite so well as Alice, but she said them better and better every day.

After breakfast grandmamma had to order the dinner, and whilst she went to the kitchen to speak to the cook, she let the two little girls run up and down the long verandah which was in front of the house, and which led to the pretty garden.

Alice read to her grandmamma, learned by heart and said some verses from her hymn-book, and little Beatrice always learned one verse every day. Then Alice did some sums, and after she had shown them, and grandmamma had found them all right, Alice wrote her copy. As soon as Alice began to write, Beatrice brought her letters and tried to learn to know them. Grandmamma told her when

she knew them all she would give her a book with large letters and words.

After the lessons were over, the little girls went out for a walk with Mary.

Mary was a kind person and very fond of the two children, and they liked Mary very much. Mary went with Alice and Beatrice down the sloping walks, till they came to a gate, which they opened; they then went across a little wooden bridge, and down a very steep path and some steps that led to the sea-shore.

Alice and Beatrice liked to go to the seashore very much. Mary sat on the sand and worked, whilst Alice and Beatrice played about. They had each of them a pretty wooden basket and a little wooden spade, and they dug in the sand on the sea-shore, and filled their baskets with sand or stones. Sometimes they dug large holes for the sea to come in, and they liked to see the waves come higher and higher, till the large holes were full of water. Sometimes Alice and Beatrice dug a long ditch down the sloping shore to the edge of the waves, and the water ran down it into the sea, and they called it their river. When they were tired of

digging, they asked Mary if they might look for pretty stones, and shells, and sea-weed.

There were plenty of pretty stones and seaweed, and even shells, to be found. Some of the shells were pretty and white and smooth, and the children took great care of them, and took them home to play with. They often found sea-weeds of all colours, red and yellow, green and brown, and some sea-weeds were small and fine, like hair or moss; and grandmamma helped them to dry them, and put them on paper. There was another kind of seaweed that was very long and heavy, and looked like large black rushes. Mary told them not to take those home, for they were not nice, and they could not be dried.

One day Alice found a pretty stone, or pebble, as it is called: it was very clear, not quite so clear as glass; but when she held it towards the sun, she could see through it.

'I will take the pretty stone home, Mary,' said Alice, 'and give it dear mamma.'

'Perhaps,' said Mary, 'your mamma will have it cut and polished for a brooch.'

'Yes, I am sure she will,' cried Alice; 'I am

so glad that I have found it!' and Alice put it into her pocket.

'I will try and find a pretty stone too for mamma,' said Beatrice, and she ran along the sand, close to the waves: and just when Mary called her to come away, a large wave came higher up than the others had done before, and wetted little Beatrice's shoes and socks.

Beatrice ran back to Mary, and she was a little frightened, and she said, 'Mary, I did not hear you call me till that big wave came up to my feet, and I could not run away quick enough, and my feet are so wet.'

'We must go home directly, Miss Beatrice,' said Mary, 'and make haste and change your shoes and socks;' and they went home.

Another day they went to the beach again, and their grandmamma went with them. As they went through the pretty garden, they stopped to look at the rose-trees that were beginning to bloom; and grandmamma gave Alice a white rose and Beatrice a dark red one. She cut off the thorns from the stalks, and Beatrice asked her, 'Why do you cut off those things, grandmamma?'

'Those things are called thorns, my dear child; they would prick your fingers, for they are very sharp.'

The children looked at the thorns, and put their fingers to them, and said, 'They prick like needles.' They thanked her for the roses, and smelt them, for they were very sweet.

They went on to the gate, and then grandmamma opened it, and gave Beatrice her hand across the narrow bridge, and down the steep path, and the many steps.

Alice ran on alone, jumping along, and pulling some wild flowers that grew in the grass on each side the path, and she came first to the beach, and then ran back to meet her grandmamma and little sister.

When they came to the sea-shore, they saw that Mary was there waiting for them with a large basket. They knew that the basket was full of their bathing dresses; for their grandmamma liked them to bathe in the sea whenever the weather was warm and the sun shone.

There was a tent at the foot of the cliff, for a steep cliff rose very high a little way from the sea-shore on each side of the narrow valley through which they had to come. In this tent the two little girls went to undress and get ready for bathing. Mary helped them; and when they had put on their bathing dresses, Mary did the same, and went into the sea with them.

Alice ran into the water alone, and jumped over the little waves that came rolling gently on to the shore. Beatrice took hold of Mary's hand, but she was not afraid, and she dipped her face and hands into the waves, and she tried to jump about like Alice.

Then Beatrice asked Mary to let her float; and Mary held Beatrice's head, and the little girl lay quite stiff and quiet on the water, and her feet and body floated, which she liked very much.

'Please, Mary,' said Alice, 'let me try and float too.' And Mary let Beatrice stand by her side and floated Alice backwards and forwards.

'When I am a little older,' said Alice, 'grand-mamma says that I must learn to swim.'

'And I, too,' said Beatrice.

After the children had jumped about a short time in the waves, and were quite warm, their grandmamma said—

'Come out now, you have been in the water long enough;' and the little girls came out and ran into the tent, where they were soon dried and dressed, for their grandmamma helped them too, and they made haste to go home, up the many steps and steep path, and were glad to have their dinner, because they were hungry after their bath.





CHAPTER II.

EVENING WALK-STEAMER-LACEMAKING.

hot that the children had had no walk, but had spent most of the day in the shade under the long verandah, and in the afternoon they had played under a large tree in the garden. When the evening came it was much cooler; and after the little girls had had their tea, grandmamma told them that she would take them over the high hill at the back of the house to visit a poor woman who had been ill. Their grandmamma's house was half-way up the hill—you could see the sea through a narrow valley; and opposite the house on the other side of the valley was another high hill, and behind that hill was the town.

Grandmamma walked slowly up the hill, up a zig-zag path, and rested on a bench half-way up, for it was a very steep hill. The little girls were not tired, and they ran on before and waited for their grandmamma at each turn of the path. They went higher and higher, till at last Alice called out—

'How much I can see now, grandmamma! I can see all the town, the houses, and the church!'

'I can see two churches,' said Beatrice; 'and what a lot of ships!'

'Please, grandmamma,' said Alice, 'come up higher. Pray, dear grandmamma, make haste, there is a great smoke on the sea; it comes from a ship. Is the ship on fire?' she asked a little anxiously.

Their grandmamma was soon by the children's side.

'That is a steamer or steamship, dear Alice; it has a fire in it that causes the smoke, but it is not on fire, and you can see that the smoke comes out of a tall black chimney. You have seen the train come and go often, and you know how much smoke it makes.'

'Yes, I know; but the smoke from the train is not black like that, and why is that?'

'You are right, dear child, it is not black; but that is because they burn a different kind of coal, called coke, in trains. Trains and steamers are made to move by the same means, which is by steam. Some clever man made steam turn wheels and raise heavy beams up and down, and thus it is that ships and trains are made to move. Steam is made to grind corn, and to make biscuits, and to saw wood, and steam helps to make nearly everything we wear.'

'Oh! grandmamma, how wonderful! I do not understand how steam can do all that. The man must have been very clever to have thought of this. Do you know his name?'

'James Watt was his name; he made the first good and useful steam-engine, I believe, about seventy years ago; but he was not the first man who had found out that steam could be made useful, or who made the first engine.'

When they came to the top of the hill they saw several cows feeding on the grass.

^{&#}x27;Will these cows hurt us?' asked Alice.

'No, my dear, they will not, unless you tease them.'

'But why do people run away when they see cows?'

'It is very foolish of any one to run away. When a poor cow or ox has been treated ill by naughty boys or cruel men, and frightened and made angry, it runs about; sometimes people have been tossed and hurt. But if you will treat a cow kindly, I am sure that it will never hurt you.'

The little girls walked through the green meadow when the cows were feeding, and the cows did them no harm. They soon came to a nice little cottage, with a few trees close by, and a little garden.

Their grandmamma spoke to an old woman who was sitting outside the cottage door, and said to her that she was glad to see her up and looking better; and the old woman replied that the warm weather had done her a great deal of good, and that she was very glad to see her and the little children.

Whilst their grandmamma was talking to the old woman, Alice and Beatrice looked about them,

and examined with wonder a cushion that the old woman had had on her lap when they came.

They then played with a little kitten that was in the garden till their grandmamma had finished talking. Then Alice asked, 'What is this cushion for, with all those little sticks hanging down on each side of it, and what was the old woman doing with them?'

'Mrs. Miller is making lace, dear Alice, and these sticks are called bobbins, and there is some very fine thread which she braids and twists together into a pretty pattern.'

The kind old woman came and took her cushion, and sitting down, began to show Alice and Beatrice how she twisted the little bobbins backwards and forwards, and threw them from one side the cushion to the other. She did this at first very slowly, that the little girls might see it more easily; but when they had looked enough, she threw her bobbins backwards and forwards so quickly that the children were quite surprised. Mrs. Miller then told them that all the little girls in the village begin to learn to make lace when they are seven or eight years old, and learn soon to make it nicely.

'How very pretty it is!' said Alice. 'I should like to learn to make lace. May I, grandmamma, when I am older?'

'Yes, you may, if you wish it; but you must first learn to sew neatly, for that is more useful than making lace.'

'But why do all the little girls here learn to make lace, grandmamma?'

'Because they can help to earn money for their father and mother. 'Among the poor people in the village, very young children begin to help to earn their own bread.'

Before the little girls went home, they ran about on the green meadow, and gathered a handful of yellow cowslips and other wild flowers; but when the sun went behind the opposite hill, and the clouds above the sun were red and bright like gold, and the sea looked nearly the same colour as the clouds, grandmamma said—

'We will go back now, for it is time for my little girls to go to bed.'

Then they all returned down the zig-zag path, and were soon home again, and Alice and Beatrice went to bed, after telling Mary first of all that they had seen.



CHAPTER III.

A RAINY DAY—STORY OF PRETTY AND THE BEAR.



HAT a rainy day!' said Alice, one morning, when Mary came to call them, and to help them to dress.

'We cannot go out at all to-day.'

'What a pity!' said her little sister. 'I am so sorry.'

'What shall we do all day, if we cannot go out?' said Alice.

'The rain will make all your flowers grow, miss,' said Mary, 'and make the weather a little cooler.'

'But I want to go out and dig in the sand,' said Alice.

'And so do I,' said Beatrice.

Mary took no further notice of the children's words; but when they were at breakfast, Alice said, 'Grandmamma, is it not very tiresome that the rain is come to-day? We cannot go out. I wish that it would never rain.'

'Nasty rain,' said Beatrice; 'I can't bear the rain!'

'You must not say that the rain is nasty, for it does a great deal of good, dear children. God sends us the rain when we want it, and we thank God for it.'

'Why do you thank God, grandmamma,' asked Alice, 'for the rain? What good can the rain do?'

'It makes the grass grow; and horses, cows, and sheep, and all other animals that eat grass, live upon it; and the rain makes the corn grow, and from corn we make our bread; and what would you or I do, or any one else, if the corn did not grow and we had no bread? The rain makes the trees and the flowers grow, and all the fruit too, and my little girls would be sorry if there were no fruit.'

'Yes, indeed, grandmamma,' cried both children.

'But I thought,' said Alice, 'that the sun made the fruit ripe.'

'Yes, so it does; but the sun alone could not make the plants grow, and the rain alone could not make the flowers open their leaves, or the fruit or the corn get ripe. We want both sun and rain, and we must thank God that He gives us enough of each to do good on earth.'

After the two little girls had finished their little lessons, and done all that their grand-mamma wished them to do, she said to them—

'As you have both been good this morning, and because it rains, I will tell you a story of my two dogs, when I lived in Russia.

'It was a hot summer's day, a long time ago, when my little dog Pretty came to me yelling and barking. I was busy writing in a little sitting-room that opened into my bedroom, and my rooms in Russia were all downstairs, as there was but one floor.

'When I looked at Pretty, I saw that the dog was trembling all over, and every hair was standing up, for he was so frightened; and he whined and ran about, and howled and barked in great distress; and at last he ran into my bedroom, and crept under the bed, and there he lay trembling and whining.

'All the doors stand open in a house in Russia; so I went into the hall and then out of the open front door, and I soon saw what was the cause of Pretty's fear. There was a great brown bear; and though little Pretty had never seen a bear before, yet his terror was so great.

'The bear had a leathern strap round his mouth, a small iron chain was fixed to the strap; and when I looked nearer, I saw that a hole had been made in the bear's upper lip, and a ring was put through the hole, and the chain was fastened to the ring as well as to the leathern strap.

'A Russian peasant was with the bear, and he wore blue striped linen trousers, and his trousers were tucked into his boots, but he had neither stockings nor socks. He had a red and white checked shirt, which hung loose over his trousers, and funny pieces of blue linen sewed into the sleeves of his shirt. He had a fur cap on his head, and in his hand he carrried a long stout pole.

'The Russian peasant called to the bear to get

up, for the bear seemed tired, and had laid down to rest himself. The bear growled, but did not move at first, though his master shook the chain and pulled him by it; at last the man gave him a sharp blow with a whip he had, and told him to begin dancing.

'The poor tired bear stood up on his hind legs, and took the pole from the man's hand, and began to jump over it, but in a very clumsy manner. The man kept calling to him in a sing-song manner, pulling often with the chain, and giving him a smart cut with his whip: and the bear jumped backwards and forwards over the pole, or, as the man called it, danced, and grumbled and growled, for he seemed very cross and angry that he was obliged to do all this when he was so very hot and tired. I looked about to see where my good old dog Lion was all this time. Lion was a splendid dog, something like an English mastiff, and something like a lioness, and therefore I had named him "Lion." He went out daily with the herd of cattle into the fields and woods, and saved many of them from being killed by the wolves. He was a brave dog, and I was very fond of him. 'And where do you think I found Lion now?
—not running away and hiding himself, like
Pretty, in "the lady's chamber," but trying to
to make the bear afraid of him.

'For Lion walked slowly up close to the bear, then went round him twice, looking at him well all the time, as if to say, "I am not in the least afraid of you, Mr. Bear," and then Lion lay down on the grass in the shade, a little way off, but so that he should see him still, and went to sleep, or pretended to do so. I dare say that the bear thought he had better not go near such a brave dog, though he would have liked to give Lion a good hug, and eat him up.

'At last the Russian peasant seemed as hot and as tired as the bear, and he asked for something to eat, and some spirits to drink. So I told a servant to bring the man some black bread and some beer and a little spirits, and I ordered some honey and some bread for the bear.'

'Why did you give the poor man black bread, grandmamma?' asked Alice.

'In Russia, the servants and common people all eat black bread; the white bread which we eat here is only made for the rich people to eat!'

'But why is that, grandmamma?'

'It is because wheat, of which our white bread is made, does not grow nearly so well as rye in Russia and other cold countries: and rye makes black bread. It is not so good as wheat bread; but some people like it, and even prefer it.'

'Please, Alice, let grandmamma tell us the story of Lion and the Bear,' said Beatrice.

'Well, my dear children, you would have been glad to see how the bear liked the bread dipped in honey, and how he drank the spirits and the beer; but the man did not give him much of either. Afterwards I gave the man some money, and the poor tired bear walked after his master, as well as he could, on his four feet. As soon as the bear was gone, out came Pretty from my bedroom, and began to bark very furiously, as if he had been a brave dog, and driven the bear away.'

'Thank you, dear grandmamma,' said both the little girls. 'We like that story so much, pray tell us some more about your brave dog Lion, and about silly little Pretty, another day.'

- 'But Pretty was not always silly, although he was afraid of a big bear. He was a knowirg little dog, and so fond of us.'
- 'I should have been afraid, I think,' said Alice. 'I should not like a bear to come to this house.'
- 'There are no bears here, are there, grand-mamma?' asked little Beatrice.
 - 'And no horrid wolves?' added Alice.
- 'No, dear children, none, I am glad to say. When you read more in your history of England, you will read when the last wolves were killed in England: a very long time ago there used to be plenty of wolves here.'

The two little girls looked afraid; but they were very glad when grandmamma said—

'That was a very, very long time ago.'





CHAPTER IV.

RUSSIA AND THE FROZEN SEA.



OW, Alice, bring your atlas, and I will show you on the map where Russia lies.'

Alice brought her book of maps, and soon found the maps of Europe and Asia; and grandmamma showed her where the large country lay, and pointed out to her that the greatest part of Russia was in Asia, and reached across the whole of northern Asia.

'Oh, how big it is!' cried Alice; 'it is much bigger than all the other countries together. Look at little England, Beatrice,—this little island is England, where we live; does it not look tiny? And now look at big Russia. Look, all that yellow is Russia!' and Alice put her finger on the line that divided Russia from all

the other countries, and showed her little sister how large it was.

- 'Do you see, Alice,' said grandmamma, 'how far Russia extends? Even that smaller part that is in Europe reaches up to the Arctic or Frozen Ocean, and down to the Black Sea on the south; do you see, Alice?'
 - 'Why is that sea called the Frozen Ocean?'
- 'Because it is frozen for many months in the year, and the greater part of it is always frozen.'
- 'Can the sea really freeze, grandmamma?' asked both the little girls. 'How can the waves freeze, and be made quiet?'
- 'The sea that lies on the north of Russia freezes every winter, but our sea here does not freeze; it is too warm.'
- 'But how can it freeze, grandmamma? I cannot understand how it can,' said the little girl.
- 'It is difficult to make it clear to you, Alice; but I will try and explain it. First, from the great cold, little pieces of ice are formed; these pieces float about, for ice is lighter than water, and are tossed up and down by the restless

waves; and they grow in size, and become bigger and bigger, till some join and stick together, and go on getting larger, till by degrees they cover the surface of the water. These pieces or masses of ice are pushed towards the shore, and there the ice first begins to make a firm covering over the sea.

'But the ice on the sea is never smooth or even, like the ice on a pond or on a river; it is rough, and large pieces are heaped together, and large cracks are often made in the ice by the wind and the waves moving it, which makes it dangerous to drive or even walk a long distance over the Frozen Sea.'

'Can people drive over the sea? But if it is frozen hard, why is it dangerous?'

'Yes, dear Alice, people can and do drive on the Frozen Sea, and I have driven short distances myself on it, and I have known many people cross this gulf,' showing Alice the Gulf of Finland. 'You know, dear, what a gulf is?'

'Yes,' said Alice; 'it is an arm of the sea that runs into the land.'

'The peasants, or poor country people, used

to drive across this gulf, as soon as the ice was tolerably firm and safe. They drove in small sledges drawn by little horses, and took over corn and other things to sell to the inhabitants of rocky Finland, where very little corn grows. But the getting across the large crevices or cracks was both difficult and dangerous. The people for that purpose take long boards with them on their sledges, and laying them across these open places, they drag their sledges over, walking over the planks themselves, and making their horses swim through the water; but their horses have often been lost in these large cracks, for though the horses can always swim, they cannot always get out of them, as the ice at the edges is brittle, and breaks under their efforts to scramble up.

'I remember how some men, belonging to one of our villages, were lost in a snow-storm out at sea, and their bodies were not found till the summer, on a small, uninhabited island where they had taken refuge during the storm, lying on their faces. I believe that they had first lost their horses.'

'How did they die, poor men? Were they

starved or frozen to death on that desert island?'

'I believe that they were frozen to death, and had gone to sleep from the cold, and never awoke.'

'How very sad!' said both the little girls.

'But did you like Russia, grandmamma,' asked Alice; 'so cold and horrible, with wolves and bears?'

'The winter in Russia is very long, and where I lived it sometimes lasted half the year, and we saw no grass all that time.'

'How did you like to live in Russia, then?'

'I had kind friends there; but though I liked some people very much, I did not like the country or the climate. In truth, dear children, there is no country in the whole world like our dear England; no country where people love God and pray to God so much as in England; and no country where everybody tries to do so much good as in England.'

'Now, Alice, look for the two great capital cities of Russia. The old capital is called Moscow, and the new one is called St. Petersburg.'

Alice looked carefully at her map, and when grandmamma had told her that St. Petersburg lies high up in the north and Moscow much lower to the east, Alice found both places.

'Please show me, grandmamma, where you lived.'

'Here,' said grandmamma, 'on the shores of the Gulf of Finland, where the sea freezes in winter.'





CHAPTER V.

CELLAR—WALK TO THE SEA-SHORE— RAINBOW, ETC.

HE next morning it rained again, and the little girls could not go out; but they were not unhappy, because they

knew that grandmamma would tell them some stories, or give them something to amuse them.

After their lessons, grandmamma said, 'Alice and Beatrice, I am going down into the cellar, will you come with me?'

'Yes, please, please,' cried both the little girls; 'we shall like to come with you so much; we have never seen the cellar.'

'Is it quite dark, grandmamma?' asked Beatrice.

'Yes, to be sure,' said Alice; 'but Mary has a candle, and will show us light.'

Mary walked on in front, and went slowly down a long, dark, narrow staircase. Alice ran after her, and Beatrice, holding grandmamma's hand, followed carefully.

The little girls looked about in wonder; they did not know what a large place the cellar was. There were several rooms, all called cellars, which Mary showed them. First, to the right hand, without a door, was a very large and black-looking place, and when Mary lighted it up, the children saw that it was full of coals.

'That is our coal cellar, miss,' said Mary; 'and this,' opening a door, 'is for the beer and cider.'

The children looked in, and saw several tubs of beer and cider placed side by side. Then grandmamma unlocked another door, and that was the wine cellar. They all went in; it was much cleaner and drier than the other cellars, and all the bottles were arranged neatly: and just when the children were going to ask some questions, grandmamma remembered that Mary had forgotten to bring down a bottle of wine to exchange for another bottle; so Mary went back with the candle, and Alice and Beatrice

were left in the dark cellar with their grand-mamma.

At first the two children were quite silent, till Beatrice, who held grandmamma's hand, said, Grandmamma, can God see us everywhere?'

'Yes, Beatrice; everywhere and always.'

'Can God see us in this dark cellar?'

'Yes, dear children. God sees in the dark as in the light; by night and by day: God sees everybody and everything. In the Psalms¹ you will read, "He who planted the ear, shall he not hear? or he who made the eye, shall he not see?" which means that God who made our ears must be able to hear everything, and God who made our eyes surely can see everything.'

Little Beatrice thought a little while, and then she said, 'But God cannot tell mamma when I am naughty, can He?'

'No, my dear little girl; but you must fear God more than you fear mamma. You can never be naughty without God's knowing it; and are you not afraid of God's being angry with you?'

¹ Psa. xciv. 9.

'Mamma says that God is very good and very great,' said Alice, 'and that He takes care of us always, and of the whole world; and will God be angry with such a little girl as Beatrice?'

'If Beatrice did not know that it was wrong to be naughty, God would not be angry with her; but Beatrice knows quite well when she is good and when she is naughty.'

Little Beatrice pressed grandmamma's hand, and as grandmamma thought she heard her sob, she took her up in her arms, and Beatrice whispered, as soon as her tears let her, that she would try and be very good.

'You must think more about being good, both of you, when you say your prayers, and when you ask God to help you to be good children.'

Mary now came back with the candle, and grandmamma soon finished all that she wished to do, and then they all went upstairs again; and it seemed so light and bright when they were upstairs, that they could scarcely see, and the sun was shining, and the rain had ceased. The black clouds had gone away far over the hills, and the blue sky was there again.

Alice and Beatrice clapped their hands, and were like the sunshine, gay and bright; all their black clouds had gone away too. They put on their hats and jackets to run down the steep path to the sea for their usual bath; but before they went, grandmamma told them to be careful, for it would be very slippery after the rain.

Alice and Beatrice walked slowly down to the sea-shore with Mary. When they crossed the wooden bridge they were surprised to see how much water was in the little brook. They stopped to look at it, for it was very pretty: there was quite a waterfall just above the bridge, and the water splashed and made a loud noise in falling. The grass looked more green, and the flowers smelt more sweet, and Alice said, 'Mary, I think that grandmamma is quite right: the rain does a great deal of good. The grass looks much greener, and the flowers look much prettier, and the little brook does not murmur now, but it rushes and roars like the river Sid by the mill. I know some pretty verses about "How welcome is the rain!" but I never thought before how nice the rain was.'

'When it is over, Alice; but not while it rains and you cannot go out,' said Beatrice.

'But grandmamma tells us nice stories, or shows us something. I do not think that I mind the rain now,' said Alice.

'Oh! Mary, what is that over the sea?' cried Alice. 'How beautiful it is! Look, Beatrice, blue and red and yellow—I cannot count the colours.'

'It is a rainbow, Miss Alice,' said Mary.

'But what is a rainbow, and how does it come there?'

'You must ask your grandmamma when you go home. I only know that it comes when the rain is over.'

The sea had been very rough early in the morning. A sailor told the children that it was then much too rough for them to bathe; but the rain had come and made the sea smoother, and Alice said, 'The rain has done good again.'

The waves, or breakers, as they are called, when they came up on the shore, were still too rough for the little girls to move about alone in the water, so Mary let them sit near the edge and held them firmly; and the white



Fishermen pushing their Boat off to Sea. - Page 43.



waves dashed over their heads and the froth covered them, and they liked it very much.

They saw two fishermen afterwards putting a boat into the sea, and they begged Mary to let them stay and see it go off. Several times the men pushed the boat off the shore, and each time a big wave came and lifted it up and threw it back again. Then two other men came to help them, and pushed the boat with great force from the shore far into the water; and the boat rocked up and down so much among the great waves, that the two children were frightened, and Alice began to cry. But Mary told them not to be afraid, for the men were quite safe, as the sea was much smoother as soon as the boat had passed the breakers and was farther off the shore.

When Alice and Beatrice were at home they told grandmamma all that they had seen, and how high the waves were, and that there was so much white froth on the shore.

Then Alice asked grandmamma to tell them about the rainbow that they had seen. 'It was so beautiful, grandmamma!'

'I cannot explain to you the reason why the

rainbow appears, but I know that it is caused or made by the sun being reflected on the moist air. You know, Alice, what "reflected" means; it is as when the light of the candle is seen again, or reflected in the looking-glass: and the sun shining on the moist air reflects those bright colours on a cloud. When you are older you will learn all about it, and why it is always in the shape of an arch or bow. Every one loves to see a rainbow, because it reminds us of the promise God made to Noah, and all people, after the flood, that He would no more destroy all flesh, which means, every living creature.'

'I remember all about it, grandmamma,' said Alice; 'I have read it in my Bible stories. May I read it to Beatrice?' and Alice fetched her book and read about the flood and the rainbow to Beatrice; and afterwards grandmamma read to them from the Bible as follows (Gen. ix. 13–15): 'I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: and I will remember my covenant between me and you and every living creature of

all flesh: and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.'

'So you see, dear children, that God has made a covenant, which means an agreement or promise, never to destroy the earth again by a flood, and the rainbow is a sign of His promise, and reminds us of it.'

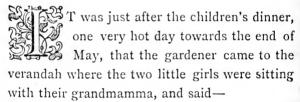
'I am very glad to know about the rainbow, and I will think of God's promise when I see one again.'





CHAPTER VI.

DEES SWARMING—FABLE OF THE ANT AND GRASSHOPPER.



- 'Please, ma'am, the bees are swarming.'
- 'Swarming, grandmamma,' said Alice and Beatrice, 'what is that? May we come and see?'

Grandmamma gave leave, and they ran and put on their hatsand followed their grandmamma into the garden, to that part where the bee-house was. When they came there, the gardener showed them a large black lump, that looked

like a great bag, hanging from a rose-tree, and the rose-tree was bent down by the weight of it.

Grandmamma explained to the children that the black lump or mass was all bees; that there had been too many bees in the hive, so that there was not room enough for all of them to work, and that the hive was too hot in this very hot weather, and the queen bee wished to seek another home for herself, and had flown out accompanied by the older bees, leaving all the young ones and a young queen in the old hive with its store of honey.

When the queen bee had settled on this rosetree, all the other bees that were flying about in the air had come to her, and collected round her, hanging one over another. Grandmamma told the children, too, that every bee had provided itself with a quantity of honey, in case they should not find a shelter that night, and were not able to provide themselves with food the next day; each bee carried a little bag of honey.

The children were very much interested in hearing this, and were not afraid, because grand-

mamma told them that the bees rarely sting people when they are swarming; so they went nearer, and liked to see the gardener take a board and place it on a flower-pot just under the rose-tree; then he took a hive and turned it up and held it under the swarm of bees, and he shook the rose-tree very sharply twice, and the lump of bees fell off into the hive, or at least the greater part of it: and the gardener turned the hive down with all the bees that were in it on to the board. A number of bees that had not fallen into the hive, began to buzz and fly about; but the gardener said—

'If the queen bee is inside, and I think she is, the others will soon go to her.'

And he raised the hive a little on one side by putting a pebble under it, and thus made room enough for the bees to enter the hive.

Alice and Beatrice, seeing so many bees still flying about, thought that they were all coming out again; but the bees knew better; their queen was in the hive, and content with her new house, and all the bees went in by degrees, and soon but very few were seen flying about the hive.

The gardener said that he would leave the hive where it was till the evening, when he would move it into its proper place.

Whilst the gardener was thus busied, Beatrice cried out, 'Look! look! what are those bees doing? Oh, grandmamma, do look at them!'

Grandmamma turned to look, and so did Alice, and they saw some bees pouring out of another hive, as if they were blown out of it, or shot from a gun. Out and out they came quicker and quicker, pouring thicker and thicker; and then they rose in the air, and spread about, and whirled round and round, flying higher and higher, and it seemed as if the whole air was filled with bees, and they made quite a noise when they flew, humming so loud. Grandmamma told the two children that this was a swarm from another hive, and added, 'Now we must try and watch where they will settle, and we must follow them. I hope that they will not fly away, else we shall lose them.'

Alice and Beatrice looked on in great astonishment, and then followed their grandmamma, who would not call the gardener or ask him to follow this swarm, as he was still busy with the other.

'Are you not afraid, grandmamma, that these bees will fly away, they fly so high and so far?'

'No, dear; I think that they will settle soon, as they begin to fly lower and more together.' And as she spoke, the cloud of bees came lower and lower, and soon a black mass was seen on an apple tree, just between two branches. The black mass grew larger and larger, till at last the number of flying bees became less, and they grew quiet. They covered the branch all round, and it looked as if something black had been put round the branch.

'How will John get those bees? He cannot reach them, they are so high up.'

'John will bring a ladder, and some one must hold the board and the hive for him.'

Alice ran to call the gardener, and told him of the second swarm.

John said, 'That is your luck to-day, miss; two swarms on one day are very lucky. The weather is hot, and our hives are so full of brood, and so heavy, that I dare say they are

glad enough to get rid of some of their numbers and go into a new hive.'

'But have you another hive and a board ready, John?' asked Alice.

'Yes, miss, to be sure I have. I made ten new hives this winter, when I had nothing else to do, and I got the carpenter to cut me a dozen boards; so we have plenty for all the swarms that may come. Perhaps, miss, your grandmamma will like me to take the new Scotch hive which came last week, so I will bring that and a straw one, and ask her which is to be used.'

Alice went with John: and Alice carried the straw hive, and John carried the Scotch hive, which was an octagon, or eight-sided, wooden one, painted red, with glass windows and shutters; and he took two boards as well, and they both hastened to the kitchen garden, where the new swarm of bees had settled.

'What luck the little ladies have, ma'am!' said the gardener. 'You promised them the second swarm; and what a fine one it is, much bigger than the one I have just hived!'

'Yes, this is the children's swarm, and I am

glad that it is such a large one. But how will you take it, John? it is in such an awkward place.'

'With the ladder, quite casy, ma'am; but,' added John, looking up at it, 'I can't shake them off the branch, and shall have to take them as I can.'

John ran to fetch the ladder, which was close by against the wall, where he had been pruning some fruit trees.

The little girls were very impatient, and watched the gardener mount the ladder; then their grandmamma handed him the Scotch hive; and to their great astonishment, John said—

'I must sweep these bees into the hive.'

The gardener fixed the wooden hive between the ladder and his own knee, and then with one rapid sweep with his hands, he threw the whole lump of bees into the hive, and turned the hive down on the board.

A great number of the bees flew off and rose again high up into the air, but John said—

'Don't be afraid, ma'am, they never sting when they are swarming.'

Alice and Beatrice began crying out, for the bees were flying all about their grandmamma; but John was soon down from the ladder, and taking the board with the hive upon it very gently, he placed them carefully on a garden bench close by, and raising one side of the hive a little, as he had done with the first swarm, he left the bees, and they all stood at a little distance and watched them.

The bees still rose in great numbers high into the air, and whirled about in great confusion, and John began to fear that the queen bee was not in the hive; but by degrees they began to cluster round the hive and cover it. For it seemed that one or two had found out that the queen was safely housed in the strange-looking box, and had told the news to the others, for they came lower, flying closer and closer, and crept all over it until they had found the entrance, and before a quarter of an hour had passed, there was scarcely a bee to be seen out of the hive.

'You can leave them safely now, I think, John, till the evening, and then I shall like these two swarms to be placed in the new bee-

house. And now you know, dear Alice and Beatrice, that the Ayrshire hive is yours, and all the honey the bees make will be yours too.'

The little girls were much pleased, and thanked their grandmamma well. Afterwards they returned slowly through the hot garden to the verandah, and they were very glad of its cool shade.

Their grandmamma told them a great deal about bees: that this immense family, of often twenty thousand bees, was obedient to one single bee, a queen bee, who was their mother and their queen, for whom they worked and gathered stores of honey, and whom they protected from all harm. Grandmamma told them how busy and industrious the bees were, how early they were up in the summer, and how many times they flew out and returned ladened with honey or with pollen which they take from the flowers, what distances they fly in search of flowers, and it has been proved that they will fly even several miles to gather honey.

She described to the children how carefully they laid up a store for the winter; and said that it was cruel of people to kill the bees to get the honcy, instead of being content to take only what the bees can spare, which is often a great deal.

'I never kill my bees, you know, and I have plenty of honey—indeed, much more than I want.'

'I can say, "How doth the little busy bee!"' said Beatrice, and her grandmamma let her repeat the whole of the little hymn, which Beatrice did very nicely, and grandmamma said, 'You will soon see through the little windows of your new hive "how skilfully she builds her cells." I will let you read about the cells in a nice book called "Homes without Hands."

'There is another insect,' grandmamma went on, 'which is very industrious, and lays up a large store of food for the winter, and that is the ant. There is a very pretty fable in French about the ant and the grasshopper, which, when you are older, I should like you to learn.'

'But will you tell us about it, grandmamma?' asked Alice.

'Well then, my Alice, I will try, but I cannot tell it in the pretty and clever way it is told in French. It was thus: One cold stormy October, a grasshopper, who had skipped and chirped in the sun all through the summer time, came to an ant, and said, "Good Mrs. Ant, you have such a large store of corn and seed in your hill, will you spare me a little, for I am very hungry?"

'Now, though the ant was very industrious I am afraid that she was not very charitable, or perhaps she thought it was useless to feed lazy people who will not work; so she answered and said, "Pray, Mrs. Grasshopper, what did you do all the summer, while I was working hard, and laying in a store to keep my children through the winter?"'

"Oh, in summer I sang and chirped all the day long," replied the grasshopper.

"Then I advise you," said the ant, "to dance now;" and the ant went into her house in her hill, and left the grasshopper to die.

'You know, both of you, what an ant-hill is, do not you?'

'Yes, grandmamma, I remember those little mounds, which I wanted to kick to pieces to make the ants run about, and you would not let me, and told me that it was cruel. Now I understand that those ant-hills are the ants' houses, where they live and lay up their food for the winter.'

'You are quite right. Here in England the ant-hills are small, but in other countries they are as high as you are. When I first saw them in Russia, I could not believe that they were ant-hills; and the ants are very little larger than those here, and yet they can collect such quantities of earth and leaves, and can raise up such pyramids for their houses.'

'The ants are not so good as the bees; they do not make anything for us, like those nice busy bees,' said Alice. 'I do not like them; and, besides, the ant was very cross to the poor grasshopper.'

'The ant was certainly very uncharitable; but all animals act only in accordance with God's laws. This is a fable to show the difference between industrious and idle people. God has taught all creatures who are to live through the winter, to labour and lay up stores; but the grasshopper and butterflies who flutter in the sunshine, and many other insects, by

God's will are made to live only for a short time, and therefore do not need to store food like the ant and the bee.

'The industrious ant serves in the fable to show us that we ought all to work, and you know from the Bible, that God has ordained that man should earn his bread in the sweat of his brow, which means by working. The poor man works, or ought to work, with his hands, the gentleman, or the educated man, with his head; but work is ordered for all—for the queen in her palace, and for little children at school.'





CHAPTER VII.

SAIL TO BRANSCOMBE-HORSES CARRYING COALS.

mamma one morning, 'make haste and eat a good breakfast, for we are going to spend the day at Branscombe.'

'Branscombe! Oh, how nice, grandmamma! But how are we going? Are we going to walk?'

'No, dear children, we are going in a boat. The weather is so fine to-day, and there is so little wind, and John Bartlett tells me he thinks that it will remain fine; and therefore we will go in his boat to Branscombe, and see the peautiful rocks there.'

Alice and Beatrice made haste; they were sery much pleased to go in a boat, for they had

never been before on the sea. The little girls would have eaten no breakfast, unless grandmamma had told them that the sea air would make them very hungry, and that they must try and eat their breakfast properly. They were told that they were to have their dinner at Branscombe, which pleased them much.

The cook had provided a nice dinner, and had packed it into a basket; and the gardener carried it down the steep path and steps to the sea-shore.

At last grandmamma said, 'Now you have been very good children; run upstairs, and ask Mary to dress you.'

Alice and Beatrice ran upstairs; and whilst Mary was taking out their hats and jackets, they both sat down on the carpet and pulled off their shoes, and put on their thick boots, and stood very quiet when Mary buttoned their little white jackets and tied on their hats.

'I will put your cloaks with your grandmamma's,' said Mary, 'because it will be cold when you come back.'

'Cold!' cried Alice, 'this hot day. Oh, Mary, we cannot want our cloaks!'

'On the sea it is often cold, Miss Alice; and it may be late when you return,' added Mary.

The three cloaks were put together, and the children were glad to see that Mary was to come with them in the boat.

When they came to the shore, there was John Bartlett waiting for them, and a very nice large boat, half on the sand and half in the water, and there was another sailor there, and a little boy.

Little Beatrice said, 'Grandmamma, that is Jack; I know Jack, he brings us nice shrimps for our tea; don't you Jack?' and the boy smiled. 'I am so glad that Jack is going with us.'

The sea was very smooth, and the tide was neither high nor low, and there were no waves.

The children were lifted into the boat, after grandmamma and Mary had walked along a sloping plank into it, and had seated themselves at the end, where there were cushions, and Alice and Beatrice sat on the cushions on each side of their grandmamma.

Bartlett and the little boy jumped into the boat; and the other man first pushed the boat

deeper into the sea, going into the water himself, and then climbed into the boat; and Bartlett and his boy, each with an oar, rowed a little till they were away from the shore, and the boat tossed up and down, and Alice and Beatrice came close to grandmamma and looked afraid.

Grandmamma then took Beatrice on her lap, and said—

'A boat always rocks up and down at first; as soon as the sails are up, it will be much quieter.'

So they did not cry; but Beatrice said, 'I should like to go back best.'

'May we go back?' asked Alice.

'No, dear children, you must wait a little, and then I think that you will like the boat very much. Look at little Jack Bartlett, how he helps his father to unroll the sail and to pull the ropes.'

The children looked, and saw the sailor and his boy unroll a large piece of cloth; they linew that it was a sail, and they saw the men rulit up a high pole, which Alice told her siste as called a mast. The sail was red, and had a

little hole in it. The wind blew upon the sail and made it straight; then the two men put up another sail, and little Jack came to sit near grandmamma, at her end of the boat.

There was so much to look at, that the children soon forgot their fear, and Alice asked—

- 'What is Jack doing at our end of the boat?'
- 'He is steering, miss,' said Bartlett.
- 'But what is steering?'
- 'Steering means guiding the boat; and this is done by a piece of wood at the end, which Jack moves backwards and forwards in the water, and this makes the boat go to the right or to the left, as his father tells him.'
- 'How funny that is! How can a bit of wood make a boat go one way or another?' said Alice.
- 'I cannot explain it to you now, dear Alice; but when you are older I will show you how it moves, and what it does. This piece of wood is called the rudder;' and Alice watched the rudder some little time.
- 'Why is there a hole in the sail, Jack?' asked little Beatrice. 'Is the sail old?'
 - 'No, little miss,' said Bartlett, 'it is quite a

new sail; but a lady let her dog make that hole only last week.'

'Why did she let her dog make that hole and spoil your new sail?' asked Alice.

'The lady was playing with her dog, as she sat on the beach, and threw stones for him to fetch; and at last she threw a stone on to the sail, that was lying next my boat, and the dog jumped upon the sail, and turned it over the stone, and then he bit and gnawed at the sail to get it out. The lady did not think what harm she did me in letting her dog make a hole in my new sail,' said the boatman.

'Did she not give you anything for the mischief her dog had done?' asked grand-mamma.

'No, ma'am, nothing; and she did not even say that she was sorry, but took no notice, and walked away.'

'That was naughty of her,' said Beatrice; I will not let our good dog Wolf bite any sail.'

The wind filled the sails, and the boat glided quickly through the water. The children began to enjoy the pleasant movement, and liked to watch the mark in the water that the boat left

behind it; and asked if they might put their hands into the clear green water, which grandmamma allowed them to do.

Alice soon cried out, 'Oh, grandmamma, how far I can see into the sea! How deep it is, and how green, and how pretty!'

'Very pretty,' repeated Beatrice; and both children looked long over the side of the boat.

'What is Jack doing now?' asked the children suddenly, when they saw the boy unwind some cord from a piece of wood, and throw the end of it into the sea; then he threw another piece of cord, and then another, till at last there were four strings in the sea, two on each side the boat.

'He is fishing,' said grandmamma.

'Fishing!' cried Alice; 'please tell me how he is fishing.'

'Each of these cords has a hook at the end of it,' said grandmamma, 'and on each hook is a little bit of fish or meat. When the fish try to catch hold of it to eat it, the hook sticks in their throats, and they cannot get away.'

Just now Bartlett called to his boy, and said, 'Jack, you have got a fish on that line;' so

Jack pulled up the line—and it was a very long piece of string—and at the end hung a fish. The boy took it and put it into the other end of the boat, and threw his line in again. The fish jumped at first up and down, but it soon lay still; and soon several other fishes were caught, and all thrown together into the end of the boat.

The little girls were sorry, for they did not like seeing the fishes hurt.

'Jack,' said his father, 'go back to the rudder, for we must try and land soon. There is Branscombe now, young ladies.'

The children looked and saw that they were coming quite close to the land again. The rocks were no longer red in colour, as at Salcombe, but white, and very different in shape; and there was a wide valley between these rocks and hills, and a very few houses were in the valley, not far from the sea-shore.

'What a large ship that is! Shall we go close to it?' asked Alice.

'Yes, quite close, miss; it is full of coals, and the people on board are putting the coals into sacks, and then they let down the sacks into those big boats.' Their boat soon came quite near the large ship, which grandmamma told the children was called a collier, because it always carried coals from one place to another. The children looked hard at the ship, as they had never been so close to a ship before. Then they sailed past the collier, and soon came up to the big black boat, and saw that it was full of sacks of coals, and they soon passed that. Beatrice thought that the men who were rowing the boat looked very black and dirty.

'The coals make the men black, Beatrice,' said Alice. 'If we played with coals, our hands and our dresses would be quite black too.'

"But do these men play with the coals?" asked little Beatrice.

'No; to be sure they do not. Did you not see how the men put the coals into the sacks, and how the dust flew about on the ship? That is enough to make anybody black and dirty.'

The boat now came nearer and nearer to the land, and the little girls looked eagerly, and asked how they should get on shore.

'Quite easy, little miss,' said Bartlett. 'Now, please sit quite quiet, and we will run her on

shore. But please, ma'am, will you sit in the middle of the boat?' which grandmamma and Mary did immediately; and the two sailors let down the sails, and took the oars and rowed hard, and in a very few minutes the boat went on to the shore, the one end much higher than the other end. The men jumped on to the shore; and when the next wave came and lifted the boat, they pulled it by a rope, and brought it up much higher on the shore.

'Please take me out, Bartlett,' cried Beatrice. 'And me too,' said Alice. 'May we go, grand-mamma?' asked the children; and as the answer was 'Yes,' the children went to the higher end of the boat, and were lifted on to the shore, and grandmamma and Mary and Jack followed them. The great basket that the cook had packed was taken out, and the cloaks and umbrellas.

'Take all the things up to the farm-house, please, Bartlett,' said grandmamma, 'and tell Mrs. Wilmot that we shall soon come up.'

The children, in the meantime, were looking at something which amused them very much.

There were a number of horses—about twenty

(for Alice counted them)—which all walked, one after each other, with no one to guide them, up to the big black boat that had brought the sacks of coal, and had just reached the shore. The horses, one after another, went into the water to the side of the boat; and when the men had laid a sack of coals across each horse's back, the horses went away out of the water in a row, and up the shore, and carried the sacks in front of a large house, where some men took off the sacks, emptied each sack, and threw them over the backs of the horses, which then turned round and went back again to the boat. Thus there were always two rows of horses, one row going to the sea, and the other returning loaded with sacks of coals.

The little girls were very much pleased to see how clever the horses were—how regularly they went, never stopping behind, but on and on till they reached the right place. They liked to see each horse come up to the edge of the sea, put down its head for an instant, as if to see how deep the water was, and step in until it reached the boat, then wait till its turn came, and take the place of the last horse that was

loaded. The horses did not seem to mind the waves that washed up against them, for the tide was high, and there were more waves than when the children landed.

After Alice and Beatrice had looked a long time, they turned away from the sea, and went up the path that led through a green field up the side of the valley, and followed their grandmamma till they came to an old farm-house.

They were very hot and tired, for the path was long and very steep, and the sun shone bright, and they found the weather much warmer on the land than on the sea.

There was a large tree in front of the house, and it was so shady and cool there, that grand-mamma asked the farmer's wife if she would let them have a table and some chairs under the tree, as they would like to sit in the shade, and eat their dinner out of doors.

Mrs. Wilmot, the farmer's wife, then ordered a table and some chairs, and Alice and Beatrice sat down and rested a little, for they were tired; but very soon they began to run up and down the sloping side of the hill, and laughed when some sheep that were feeding there began

to run about too; and they chased the sheep about, till at last the sheep leaped over the hedge at the end of the field, and began to jump from one rock to another.

Alice and Beatrice followed the sheep; but, on going through the gate, they saw that they were near the sea, which lay below the steep cliff; and large pieces of white rock, that sparkled in the sun, lay half-way down, as if they had fallen down.

'You must not go so near the edge,' said Mary, who had followed them. 'Miss Beatrice, give me your hand, and I will let you look down into the sea.'

'I can take care of myself,' said Alice; 'please let me, Mary. Oh, I never saw such beautiful rocks! I wish that grandmamma were here, she would like so much to see them. What is that large white piece further on—it goes so far into the sea?'

'That is Portland, a sort of island; it is a long way off; only to-day the air is so clear that we can see it easily. But we must go back to your grandmamma,' added Mary. 'Are you not hungry?'

'Oh yes, so hungry, Mary! Let us go back to the nice farm-house.' And they ran quickly back again.

Alice and Beatrice found the table spread with a white table-cloth, and some nice things on it ready for their dinner. The farmer's wife had lent some plates, and had put some milk and some cream on the table, and some of her own brown bread; and the children drank the milk, and grandmamma gave them some fruit tart, with a little of the nice cream.

'It is very good of the farmer's wife to give us such nice things,' said Alice; 'everything tastes so much better than what we have at home, I think. But I was very hungry and thirsty; perhaps that's why I like everything so much to-day.'

"I think that is one of the reasons, dear Alice,' was the answer.

'It is nice to have our dinner under this tree: do you not like it, grandmamma!'

'Yes, very much.'

'And so do I, grandmamma,' said little Beatrice.



CHAPTER VIII.

WALK ON THE HILLSIDE—TAME AND WILD RABBITS—RETURN HOME.

OON after dinner grandmamma went with the children to the pretty green field which sloped down to the white rocks.

'What is that little white thing,' asked Beatrice, 'up there, grandmamma? Look, please—it moves, it runs, it is alive!'

'And there, too, and there!' cried Alice; 'how many little animals! What can they be?'

Grandmamma looked too, and said, 'They are rabbits, little white rabbits.'

- 'Rabbits!' said Alice; 'I thought that rabbits were brown.'
 - 'Yes, so they are, my dear, that is the wild

rabbits are brown; but tame rabbits are of different colours, some white, some black, or grey, or spotted. I do not know how these tame rabbits came here.'

'May we go nearer and look at them?' both the children asked; and they went much nearer, and they saw a great number of white rabbits running about in a green field higher up the hill than the one they were walking in. The children liked to look at these rabbits running about and playing with each other.

'Why are these white rabbits called tame?' asked Alice.

'Tame animals are those that are taken care of and fed. For, as these pretty white or black rabbits are not so strong as the brown ones, they are usually kept in little houses, and fed with cabbage leaves and other food, because the cold in winter might kill them. In Devonshire the winter is not very cold; so I suppose that these rabbits do not suffer from it, and that they have learnt to make themselves warm houses in the earth, as the wild rabbits do.'

'Will you tell us, grandmamma, how the

wild rabbits make themselves houses in the ground?'

'They make or burrow holes in the ground, digging out the earth with their feet, as you must have seen a dog scratching and digging with his feet. But the rabbits dig long passages under the earth, and often near or under a tree. I have read that the rabbits first dig down straight till the hole is deep, and that then they make a passage, and sometimes turn upwards again, or make it crooked, to prevent dogs finding them and killing them.

'Rabbits live together in great numbers, and it is called a warren. They like a sandy or gravelly soil to burrow in, and make the entrance to the little house often under a furze bush that it may not be seen. Sometimes they loosen the roots of trees so much that the trees fall; and where there are many rabbits in a warren, the ground is very unsafe, for if any one was riding, the horse's foot might go through, and he would fall, and perhaps break his leg and throw his rider. Even in walking you might stumble, by getting your foot into a rabbit hole, which is not easily seen. I have

heard, too, that rabbits have undermined walls and buildings, and made them unsafe.'

- 'What is undermined, grandmamma?'
- 'It means making a hole or mine under the ground; and when these holes are made in soft sand or gravel beneath a heavy wall, it will fall into the hole.'
 - 'Will you tell us what the wild rabbit eats?'
- 'It eats nearly everything it can get; but it is very fond of all our vegetables, and would soon spoil our gardens if it came into them. The wild rabbit lives in the fields and meadows and woods, and eats the young buds of the bushes and young trees; it likes especially the tender roots of the furze bushes, and it nibbles the soft bark of the trees, and spoils a great number of them. There are also many plants and roots that it lives on.'

The children then asked to go to the end of the field, and look down on to the sea beneath; and they all went on walking till they came to the edge of the field. The two little girls called out with pleasure and surprise, for they saw beyond and below them a number of large rocks, which looked like great towers, close to the steep cliff, on the edge of which they were now standing.

Some of these rocks were slender and pointed, and sharp on the top, and many were strangely shaped, and lay scattered about; but one tall piece of rock stood out alone, nearly in the sea, as if it had been cut off the cliff, and on the top was perched a sea-gull.

'Oh, grandmamma, look at that sea-gull!' cried Alice; 'how can it stand on the point of that high rock?'

'The sea-gull need not be afraid of standing there,' said grandmamma, 'for if its foot should slip, its wings would keep it from falling; and should it even fall, which is not likely, it would not be drowned, for the sea-gull swims well on a stormy sea.'

'How wonderful it is that it can swim and fly so well!' said Alice. 'It can fly much better than a goose or a duck, and they can swim and fly a little.'

'God, in His great mercy, has made the wild bird fly and swim much better than the tame bird. The sea-gull provides its own food by diving into the waves and catching fish, and it flies about in stormy weather and swims on the wild waves. Man, or people, take care of the duck and goose, and feed it, so it does not want to fly far, or swim on rough seas.'

'How very wonderful it is!' said Alice; and little Beatrice listened attentively, although she could not understand it all.

'God's wisdom is always wonderful, my child, and God's love is very great. As God provides for the sea-gull and for all animals, and gives them all their food, and takes care of them all, so God takes care of us all, and gives us food and clothes, and everything that we want. God, as you know, gives us summer and winter, sunshine and snow and rain, and all for our good. God has made the earth beautiful, the grass green, the flowers gay, the sea wide, and the heavens high; and we must never forget to thank God for everything, and for His care of us by day and by night.'

They sat down on the edge of the cliff and rested, and looked at the beautiful sight before them; and when they had seen the sea-gull spread its wide wings and fly over the sea, and they had watched it till they could see it no

longer, they turned back to the farm-house. There they found Mary had put everything ready, and Bartlett was waiting.

Grandmamma thanked the farmer's wife, and she and the children bade her good-bye; and after grandmamma had asked Mary if she had given the sailors a good dinner, and Mary had answered that she had, they all went down the side of the hill to the shore, where little Jack and the other sailor were waiting by the side of the boat.

They all stepped into the boat, and were pushed off, and after a little rocking to and fro, which no longer frightened the children, two sails were hoisted, and as there was more wind now, the boat went much quicker.

Soon the little girls said, 'How cold it is!' for the wind blew strong; and Mary put their cloaks about them, and little Beatrice crept on to her grandmamma's lap, and soon fell asleep, for she was very tired.

Alice sat between her grandmamma and Mary, and talked the whole way. She had so many things to ask about; and she made Bartlett tell her about his little girls at home, who had no mother.

The sailor told Alice that his eldest girl kept his house clean and neat, and cooked the dinner, and looked after the little ones.

- 'Do your little boys and girls go to school, Bartlett?' asked Alice.
- 'Yes, miss, they all go; and it is a very nice school. They learn to read and write very nicely, and the little girls learn to sew.'
 - 'Can Jack swim, Bartlett?' sl:e asked again.
- 'No, not yet, for I have not much time to teach him.'
- 'Not yet! Why, Jack is older than I am, and grandmamma says that I must learn to swim next summer.'
- 'But, dear Alice, how can Jack learn to swim if his father has not the time to teach him?'
- 'Bartlett, you will teach Jack to swim when you have time, will you not? Grandmamma says that if people do not learn to swim, when they fall into the water by accident, they will be drowned.'

The sailor promised the little girl that he would make Jack swim very soon.

As the boat sailed past the high red cliffs

before they reached home, Alice spied a man and an ass on a narrow piece of rock some way down the steep side of the high cliff, and asked the sailor how and why the man had taken his donkey to such a place.

'It must be so dangerous. Look, Bartlett, how they are going along, they must fall!' and Alice looked quite uneasy and frightened.

But Bartlett soon explained to her that some poor people made gardens on tiny plots of ground among the ledges of the steep cliff, and planted them with potatoes; and as these little strips of ground slope towards the noon-day sun, and are protected from the cold north winds by the rising cliff, these people have potatoes earlier than any one else. He told her that by setting their potatoes in September or October, the potatoes were ready in early spring, and were often sent to London and sold for a great deal of money.

The sailor told the little girl that nothing but a donkey was sure-footed enough to carry down the baskets of manure for these little gardens, and to bring up the potatoes; that no horse could tread safe where these asses walk firmly and steadily, choosing their own paths. 'As you see, Miss Alice, that donkey is going on alone with his load, and the man is following him as he best can; and the man knows that it is safest to walk where his ass has gone already.'

'How clever donkeys must be, grandmamma!' said Alice. 'I thought that donkeys were always stupid. But how can it know where it is safe to walk?'

'By instinct, dear child. Instinct is a knowledge which comes of itself, and is given to animals by God. Another time I will tell you about it.'

Bartlett began to pull down the sails, and called to Jack to steer for the land, as they were now close to their own shore. Little Beatrice woke up in time to see how some very large waves lifted the boat, and brought it up high on the shingle. The sailors jumped out, and helped first the children and then grandmamma and Mary out of the boat. Before they went up the steps from the shore, they thanked Bartlett and bade him and Jack 'good-bye.'



CHAPTER IX.

THE CHILD BURNT—A NEGRO CHILD CURED BY COTTON-WOOL.

HE next day, at breakfast, Alice asked when they might go in a boat again.
'I like it so much, grandmamma. I

love to be on the sea.'

'I like it too, my Alice; but we must not go often; for yesterday you know we did nothing else but amuse ourselves, and now we will stay at home and work and do lessons.'

'Please, ma'am,' said Mary, entering the room rather hastily, 'Mrs. Dunne's little girl has been scalded with hot water. Will you please go and see the poor child? The boy says that she is screaming so much.'

'Yes, indeed I will; but whilst I am putting on my cloak and bonnet, get me some cottonwool; you will find some in the lowest drawer.' Alice and Beatrice were very sorry that the little child was hurt, for they knew the child quite well, and they sometimes went to the village to see Mrs. Dunne, who was a washerwoman.

'Their grandmamma told Mary to bring the two little girls to meet her in an hour's time, and walked very quickly to the village.

When she came near Mrs. Dunne's cottage she heard the child's screams; so she opened the door, and went in. Mrs. Dunne was holding the little girl on her lap; and the poor child was crying as loud as she could, and her mother was crying too.

'Mrs. Dunne,' said grandmamma, 'put little Betsy on the bed, and show me where she is hurt.'

Little Betsy knew the lady, and looked up at her, and left off crying for one minute; and whilst her mother put her on the bed, grandmamma made a glass of sugar and water and held it to the child to drink, and though she still went on crying, she did not scream so loud, and Mrs. Dunne was able to show the lady where her child was hurt. 'The little leg was very red, and was covered with large blisters. The lady first took off the poor child's shoe, and then drew off her little sock so quietly that it did not hurt her, and wrapped the whole leg and foot in the cottonwool she had brought, and wound it round and round with some broad tape.

The little girl soon appeared to have less pain, for her cries were less; and then Mrs. Dunne told the lady how her poor little Betsy, who was but four years old, had met with this accident.

'But I am glad that the boiling water that went on to her leg did not go into my dear child's face or neck, for then it would have been much worse.'

'You see, Mrs. Dunne, that in everything we have reason to thank God for His mercy.'

'Yes, ma'am,' said Mrs. Dunne, wiping her eyes: 'I thank God, and you too, that you have come and helped me so kindly.'

'I will leave Betsy some medicine,' said the lady, 'and I will come again in the evening and see how the poor child is; but do not move the cotton-wool on any account.'

Whilst Betsy's medicine was preparing, Mrs. Dunne was pleased to see that her little child was much easier; and after the lady had given her a spoonful of the medicine, she went away, and she met Alice and Beatrice not far from the cottage.

The two children had their hoops, and were running with them till they saw grandmamma in the distance; then they stopped their hoops, and came running to meet her.

- 'How is poor little Betsy?' asked Beatrice.
- 'Where is she hurt, grandmamma?' asked Alice.

Grandmamma told them all about Betsy, and what she had done for her, and said that the little girl was much easier when she left her.

- 'May we take her something nice for her dinner or for her tea?' asked Alice: to which Beatrice added, 'Please let us, grandmamma.'
- 'You may take Betsy a little basketful of strawberries, and you may gather them yourselves.'
- 'Thank you, dear grandmamma,' said the little girls; 'may we go now for them?'

- 'No, not now, dear children,' said grandmamma; 'you must come in and do your lessons.'
- 'Do let us go first and pull some strawberries,' said they.
- 'No; I cannot let you go till after your dinner.' Upon which, Alice and Beatrice seemed very much inclined to cry, but they knew that their grandmamma did not like them to ask again after she had refused; so they walked on slowly, and did not speak at first.

At last Alice said, 'Why did you wrap Betsy's leg up in cotton-wool, grandmamma?'

- 'Because it has been found that cotton-wool lessens the pain of a burn, and helps to make it get well.'
 - 'How did people find this out?'
- 'There is a pretty story about it, and I will tell it you:—
- 'In North America the cotton plant grows for this white wool grows on a small plant and the plant has little pods. You know what a pod is, do you not?'
- 'Yes, grandmamma; a pea has a pod, and the peas are in it.'

'Well, the cotton plant has a pod which holds its seeds—of a different shape to the peas-pod, and not so long or so large; but the seeds are wrapped up in this soft woolly stuff, which the negroes pick and clean and wash.

'It happened once that the little child of a poor negro woman was burnt all over—I do not know how; and as the mother had nothing to put on, she laid her little screaming child down on a heap of the picked cotton-wool, and returned to her work. After she had finished her appointed work she went to her child, and found that in its pain it had rolled about in the cotton-wool till it was covered with the wool, and was lying quiet and asleep; and the poor negro woman was very glad.

'Some one who had seen the accident, and also seen the child asleep, examined the child, and found that the blisters had gone down, and the burnt places, which had been quite red, were nearly well.

'After this, people tried cotton-wool for burns, and found it nearly always of the greatest service in relieving the pain and healing the injuries.'



Basket of Strawberries for the Burnt Child.—Page 91.



'Thank you, grandmamma; that is a nice story. How glad that poor woman must have been to find her little child nearly well!'

Now they were quite close to their own house, their own dog came running to them, and jumped up at them, and nearly threw little Beatrice down, which made her laugh, and she said, 'Down, Wolf, down. Grandmamma, Wolf will kiss me, he has licked my face.'

'And he has licked mine too,' said her sister.

Wolf ran on in front, and then turned back to the children, and played with them and jumped round them, and they had already forgotten their disappointment about the strawberries.

When they were in the house again, they both tried to be very good and obedient, and they were very attentive to everything their grandmamma said to them.

In the afternoon they were very happy gathering the strawberries for the poor little burnt child, and each of them had a very pretty little basket; and the gardener showed them how to put strawberry leaves into their baskets first, and then to put the ripe strawberries upon the leaves till the baskets were nearly full. Then

they gathered some more leaves to cover over the strawberries. Alice and Beatrice ran back to the house and showed their baskets to their grandmamma, and lifted the leaves a little that she might see the strawberries. She told them that they were good children, and that she would go with them to Mrs. Dunne's cottage, as she wished to see how the poor little child was. They found little Betsy sitting up on her mother's bed, looking very happy.

'I return you many thanks, ma'am, for the nice broth you sent Betsy, and for the milk. She has just finished eating her broth, for she fell asleep soon after you went away this morning, and her leg does not seem to hurt her now.'

'I am very glad to hear it,' said the lady; 'but you must leave the cotton-wool on her leg and foot for a few days, and then I expect that the skin will be quite well again.'

'Look, Betsy!' cried Beatrice, 'look at these strawberries!' And Alice and Beatrice held their baskets to the little child, who lifted up the leaves and called out with joy, 'Strawberries, mammy, pretty strawberries!'

'Eat them,' said Alice, 'they are for you; we gathered them for you.'

Little Betsy put a large ripe strawberry into her mouth, and Alice and Beatrice stood next the bed, and were glad that the little girl liked what they had brought her.

Mrs. Dunne thanked them, and emptied the fruit on to two plates, and gave the children back their baskets; and then they bade Mrs. Dunne and Betsy good-bye, and went home.





CHAPTER X.

A WINTER'S DRIVE IN RUSSIA.

HE summer was not yet over, but the weather had changed; the days were a little shorter, and the chil-

dren could no longer bathe regularly, for it was often very stormy; and the waves were so very high and rough, that they only went down to the sea-shore to watch the big waves rising up high, and then, bending their white heads over, come dashing high up on the shore—often so high that the two little girls had to run away fast, for fear that the waves should cover their feet.

'Beatrice!' said Alice, one day, 'you ought to learn "Roll on, roll on, you restless waves."'

'I do know it, Alice; only I cannot say all of it.'

'Then I will teach it you,' said Alice; and she repeated all four verses several times, till little Beatrice could say them nicely.

Grandmamma was very pleased when they came home, to hear little Beatrice say the following pretty verses to her:

'Roll on, roll on, you restless waves,
That toss about and roar;
Why do you all run back again
When you have reached the shore?

'Roll on, roll on, you noisy waves, Roll higher up the strand; How is it that you cannot pass That line of yellow sand?'

'We may not dare,' the waves reply:
'That line of yellow sand
Is laid along the shore, to bound
The waters and the land.

'And all should keep to time and place,
And all should keep to rule—
Both waves upon the sandy shore,
And little boys at school.'

And grandmamma kissed both the little girls, and said that they were good children.

One day it was very stormy; the rain fell fast, the wind howled and whistled, and the children could not go out.

'I fear that the summer is nearly over; but it is very early,' said grandmamma, 'to have such stormy weather. You have both been very good and attentive; will you like to hear something more about Russia and the cold winter there? But, Alice, take that tea-cloth to hem, and, Beatrice, bring your old dress, I will show you where to unpick it; and when you are both of you busy and quiet, I will begin.'

Grandmamma took her work, and began thus:—

'It was in winter, when your dear mamma and aunt were both little children of about your age; the snow was very deep, and the weather had been very cold; and all the rivers were frozen so hard that every one could drive across them. In Russia there are a great many bogs, which in summer are so wet and soft that no one can go near them; but in winter, people drive on the frozen bogs when they are covered with snow.'

'But why do not people drive along the roads in winter?' asked Alice.

^{&#}x27;Because the roads are often filled with

snow-drifts, and also because it is often much straighter and nearer to drive across the rivers and the bogs. But it is very difficult, when dark, to find the road on these wide and lonely moors or bogs, especially when it snows, and the fresh falling snow covers the track.'

'Were you not afraid, grandmamma, to drive in those lonely places?'

'At first I was, my Alice, but I soon became accustomed to it.'

'Please, Alice, do not talk,' said little Beatrice.

'Well, my dear children, I was telling you what a cold winter we had; but though the weather was very cold and rather stormy, your dear mamma and aunt drove with me one afternoon in a large sledge drawn by two black horses, and my good old coachman drove us, and a man-servant was with us. We drove to call on one of our neighbours, and, as is the custom in that part of the country, we stayed to tea there. The tea was late and the servants slow, for after I had given the order that our sledge should come round it was delayed; and I inquired several times, and grew impatient,

for I did not like to keep my two little girls up so long, or drive home across the lonely moor so late at night, and we had six or seven miles to drive.

'At length I was told that my sledge was at the door; and my little girls were soon dressed in their warm winter cloaks and bonnets, and the servants covered us well with our rugs lined with fur, and we had some pillows put in over our feet to keep us warm.

'When we set off, and I could look about me a little, I found that the weather was very bad; the snow fell fast, and the wind blew hard, and drifted the snow in heaps across the road, so I knew at once that our drive home would be slow and tedious.

'The horses have bells in winter; and they shook their heads, and the bells sounded cheerfully; and the horses set off briskly homewards until we came to the great bog. At first all went well, and I was glad, till we came to about half-way; the coachman then began driving very slowly, and at last stopped the horses.

"What is the matter, Mart?" I asked; "have you lost the road?"

"Yes, ma'am, I have; and the horses sink into the snow so deep that they can hardly go on."

'The footman jumped down, and said that he would go and look for the road.'

'Look for the road!' said Alice, laughing; 'how funny! How could the footman find the road if it was quite dark?'

'It is never quite dark in winter in Russia, because the snow gives some light.

'The man, however, walked about, and went so far off, that the coachman grew impatient, and, thinking that he would find the road quicker himself, jumped off his seat and left us alone with the horses, who pawed up the snow and shook their bells and harness; and your aunt and mamma were sleepy and tired and very cold.

'I took little mamma on my lap, and wrapped her up in my large fur cloak, and covered dear little aunty with the pillows, and made her comfortable and warm in her corner, so that she might go to sleep. But I myself was very cold, and was very uneasy too; for I did not like my little girls to be out late at night, and

in such bad weather; and my feet ached with cold. I tried to wait patiently, and was glad that I could see the figures of the two men in the distance. At length the coachman came back to us, and began to look at the snow close to us; and to our great joy he found that the beaten track was close by, only covered with the fresh fallen snow. He shouted to the footman, and he was soon back and seated next the coachman: and the horses seemed as glad as we were to be going home at last, and set off so briskly, that we were soon safe at home; but it was nearly eleven o'clock, for we had been just three hours on the road, which we usually drove in one hour. We were very glad to be home again, and I thanked God in my prayers that my little girls were safe.'

'Oh, grandmamma!' said Beatrice, I should be afraid to drive about in that way. I should not like to live in Russia.'

'My darling, you would not be afraid if I were with you, and told you that God was watching over us, and that God would take care of us and defend us from all harm there, in cold Russia as in our dear England.'

'Thank you, dear grandmamma,' said Alice, 'I like that story; but still I should not like to drive in the snow across those large moors in winter in Russia.

'But tell me, please, how can people find such snowy roads if there are no hedges to show them where they are?'

'The road is easily found by men and horses, because, where the snow has been trolden down and driven on, it is hard and firm, and all around is soft and deep; and, therefore, when the horses sink deep into the snow, the driver knows that they are not on the track or right road.'





CHAPTER XI.

CIDER-MAKING.

HE two little girls received an invitation from a farmer's wife, who lived in a valley not very far off, to come and see the first cider made.

'May we go, dear grandmamma, may we go?' said Alice and Beatrice; 'we shall like it so much!'

'I want very much to know how eider is made,' said Alice.

'Then you must try and learn all about it to-morrow; and what you do not understand, you must ask Mrs. Laurence to tell you.'

The children were very impatient for tomorrow, and were delighted the next morning to see that it was a fine and sunny day, and very warm.

After their early dinner, the two little girls

went with Mary over a low part of the hill, and down a steep road into the valley where Mrs. Laurence lived, who was very glad to see them.

Mrs. Laurence took the children first into her kitchen, a large room where a good fire was burning, although it was so warm out of doors. Mary took off their cloaks, and put them down on a chair in the corner; and Mrs. Laurence took the little girls out of another door, and they walked through her nice little garden, which had a number of beautiful rose trees in full bloom. The farmer's wife told Alice and Beatrice that her boys liked to keep the garden in order after they had done their farm work, and that they had budded all these roses, and she was very proud of her flowers.

When they came to the large open yard at the back of the house, they saw a number of geese come flying down the hill that rose up all round the yard; and the children stopped to see the geese come one after another with a great noise, and the sound they made with their wings was very loud and very strange; and they asked why it was.

'It is because the geese are so very heavy, and do not fly much—only now and then, when they want to come quickly to some place,' said Mrs. Laurence.

'It is a sign of stormy weather coming,' said Ellen, Mrs. Laurence's eldest girl, 'when the geese fly about and scream so: is it not, mother?'

'Yes, I have heard so, and I believe that the geese are always right; and I daresay we shall have some bad storms soon.'

'How do the geese know that there will be stormy weather soon?' asked Alice.

'God has given them the sense to see it coming,' said Mary; 'and dogs eat grass just before it rains.'

'But I do not understand,' said Alice, 'how the geese see the bad weather coming.'

'You had better ask your grandmamma, Miss Alice,' said Mary; 'she will tell you all about it.'

The little girls then followed Ellen across the yard; it was very dirty and wet, for it had rained the day before; but Ellen took Beatrice in her arms, and showed Alice how to step on

several large stones that were there, perhaps on purpose that people might step on them, and not go in the mud or water.

Two pretty dark-red cows, with long slender horns, were standing under an open shed; and Ellen went up to one of them, after she had first brought a clean wooden pail and a little stool, and she sat down on the little stool, and put the pail in front of her knees, and then she milked two streams of white warm milk into the pail, and it was all white froth, like the froth upon the waves, and the cow turned round its head and looked at the children.

They might have been, perhaps, a little afraid; but Ellen said, 'You may stroke her, miss, she is such a good cow.'

So Alice put out her hand, and rubbed the cow's head, and patted her.

'Will you like to give her an apple?' said Ellen to Alice; and Alice took an apple that Ellen gave her, and went to the cow and held out the apple to her; but when Alice saw the cow's head come so close to her, and her long tongue put out to take the apple, Alice jumped back, and threw the apple at the cow, who

stretched out her neck to reach it, but could not.

'Why, Alice,' said little Beatrice, 'you never gave the cow the apple. Were you afraid?'

'I did try to give her the apple; but her tongue was so very long, that I was afraid that she would get hold of my hand, so I threw her the apple.'

'I will pick it up, and give it to the poor cow,' said Beatrice. 'Do cows like apples?' she asked, after she had picked it up and given it to the cow, who ate it very quickly.

'Yes,' answered Ellen; 'cows are very fond of apples, and get plenty of them when they feed in our orchard; and horses and pigs and sheep all like apples.'

After Ellen had milked four cows, and showed the little girls a pretty red calf, and given it a pailful of milk and meal to drink, she took Alice and Beatrice to see the hens and the chickens and the ducks. There were such a number of chickens; and two hens had each a large brood of young chickens. The pond was full of ducks; and Ellen told the little girls that though there were plenty of rats about in the farmyard, and

rats are very fond of eating young chickens and ducklings, they never lost any of theirs, for they had two cats that always slept and lived in the hen-house, and the hens were so fond of the cats that sometimes they laid their eggs in the cats' basket. The cats liked the chickens and little ducks, and never let a rat come near them in the night.

The children begged to see the two good cats, but Ellen said, 'We will now go to the orchard.'

The orchard was a little way off, up the side of one of the hills, and the sun always shone on the trees, for the hill lay to the south, and was warm and sheltered from all cold winds.

'What lots of apples!' cried the two children; 'the trees are quite full; and why are so many on the ground and in a great heap?'

'Those are for cider, and are to be taken to our cider press; but will you not have some apples to eat?' said Ellen, 'I will show you where some very nice eating apples grow, and I will shake the tree for you.'

They walked farther into the orchard, always going higher and higher up the hill side, and they called out every time when they passed a tree which they thought looked fuller of apples than the others, till they came to a tree which was covered with red apples. This tree Ellen began to shake, and the apples came down in such numbers, and so quickly, that Alice and Beatrice were afraid that the apples would fall on their heads.

'Will you not pick some,' said Ellen, 'and put them in your baskets, and then you can eat what you like?'

Then they went higher still, to the furthest end of the orchard; and there they had a fine view of the sea and all the hills about them, and of the town; and when they had rested up there a little time, and eaten some of their nice apples, they returned with Ellen to the farm-house.

Here they found that a great quantity of apples had been brought, and had been put into a large trough at the back of the house, and a horse was harnessed to a long beam of wood, and the horse went round and round. Ellen showed the two children how the apples slipped down into a large hole, and were crushed inside in a sort of mill; and she let them see how the apples came out of this mill down below; but

they did not look like apples, but were brown and soft, and did not look at all nice.

'Why do they make those nice apples into that nasty mess?' said Alice.

'To make cider,' said Ellen. The apples are crushed to pieces in the mill, and in a short time that nasty muddy stuff will be nice clear cider.'

'Cider!' cried Alice; 'how can such horrid stuff ever be cider?'

'We let them stand a short time till the juice separates from the thick part, and it ferments, and the juice becomes cider.'

The cider press did not interest the children long; they liked most to go about the farm-yard, and help to feed the chickens, and go to the pond and look at the snow-white ducks swimming about in the pond; and whilst they were looking at the ducks putting their heads down deep in the water, Beatrice heard a great grunting behind her, and turned round and called out, 'Alice! look, what a big pig!'

Alice turned, and saw a very large black pig, with a great many little pigs running after it, all grunting together.

' How many little pigs are there?' said Alice,

counting them as she spoke. 'There are ten little pigs; and is that their mother, Ellen?'

'Yes, Miss Alice; and she is a very good mother to her little ones.'

Alice and Beatrice laughed at the idea that the old black sow, who was grunting about in the farmyard, should be called a good mother.

'But she is a very good mother,' said Ellen; 'for she takes her little pigs into the corn-fields after the harvest, and when she finds some corn on the ground, she calls her little pigs together, and lets them eat it up, and does not eat any herself till she thinks that they have had enough.'

'I did not think,' said Alice, 'that pigs loved their little ones.'

'Indeed they do, and all animals love their young; and if any one tried to take away one of her ten pigs, the old sow would fly at them, and try to bite them.'

'But will she bite us?' asked Beatrice.

'Oh no; she is very good-tempered, and knows that we will not meddle with her pigs or hurt them.'

After the children had amused themselves in

looking at everything, and at last helped Ellen to feed the chickens, they went into the farmhouse. Mrs. Laurence had a jug of milk on the table and some glasses, and a loaf of nice brown bread which she told the children she had made and baked herself, and a pat of butter was on a plate, with the figure of a cow on it. Mrs. Laurence gave the children each a glass of milk, and Ellen cut them each a slice of brown bread, and buttered it with the nice butter; and Alice called out that it was a pity that Ellen cut through the shape of the cow, and spread it on her bread.

'You have a piece of the cow on your bread, Beatrice;' and Beatrice laughed, and thought it very funny.

Alice and Beatrice thanked Mrs. Laurence and Ellen for the nice bread and butter and milk; for they were very hungry, and it was their tea-time.

Mrs. Laurence gave the children a piece of white honey-comb on a plate, for their grand-mamma.

'Grandmamma has some from her own bees,' said Alice.

'I know she has; but my honey has a different taste, for my bees gather their honey from Mutter's Moor, where there is so much heath and broom, and heath honey is reckoned the best.'

'I will ask grandmamma to give me some of hers, for hers is very good. Her bees get their honey from her garden flowers, grandmamma says, and from the lime trees.'

Mary put on their cloaks, and told them that their grandmamma had sent two donkeys for them to ride home on; for the farm was rather a long way off their home.

Alice and Beatrice were very glad, because they liked to ride very much, and besides they began to feel tired.

The little girls shook hands with, and bade Mrs. Laurence and Ellen good-bye, and were lifted on to their donkeys; and Mary walked by the side of Beatrice's donkey, and held her donkey's bridle, and thus they reached their own pretty home on the hill, and found grandmamma waiting for them at the door.

Alice and Beatrice told grandmamma about everything they had seen and done, and were soon glad to go to bed.



CHAPTER XII.

SQUIRRELS.

E have had such a nice walk, grandmamma!' said Alice, entering the
room. 'We went first with Mary
to the village, and she bought herself some
needles and pins, and some cotton; and then
we left those books, which you gave us, at the
rectory; and we saw Mr. Potter's beautiful
garden, which goes up that steep hill by the
house. There were such a number of roses in
full blossom!

'We walked a little way into Branscombe parish, and there was a big stone, and Mary told us that it was there to show where Salcombe and Branscombe met. It was so funny for Beatrice and me to jump in and out of Salcombe! How can people divide places?'

'Places or parishes or countries that cannot be divided by water must be divided by landmarks. These landmarks are sometimes large stones, sometimes an old tree, or a line of trees, or a wooden post; but water divides the best.

'I remember, when I was young, travelling from Belgium into Prussia, and only a post painted with each country's colours served to show us where Belgium ended and where Prussia began; and my sisters and I thought it fun to jump with one step from one country into another, as you did to-day from one parish into another.

'Because England is an island, and is separated by the sea from other countries, English people think it strange that nothing more than a stone or a post can serve as boundary between two strange countries; and that the people on the one side of the stone or post should speak one language, and on the other should speak another language. Some countries are divided by a chain of mountains, as the Pyrenees divide France from Spain; the Alps, France from Italy. You have learnt about these chains of

mountains, my Alice, and to-morrow you shall show me on the map the different mountain boundaries.'

'But we came home by the wood, grandmamma,' said Beatrice, 'and we saw such pretty creatures jumping about in the trees.'

'Mary called them squirrels,' said Alice.
'They were so pretty, and jumped from one tree to another such long jumps, and swung backwards and forwards on such little branches that we were afraid that they would fall down.'

'Squirrels are very pretty, interesting little animals,' said grandmamma, 'and live in the woods; and I think that they like fir-trees most, for I have seen them often in a fir wood, and I know that they eat the seeds of the spruce fir—you have seen the pretty long cones—and the squirrel bites the cones asunder and eats the seeds.

'Did you observe how small and slender they are, with small heads and pointed noses, and such bright eyes? The colour of their fur is reddish brown, and they have such a long bushy tail. The squirrel makes two nests, a summer nest and a winter nest. In the latter, which is very strongly built, and thick and warm, it rolls itself up and lies asleep through much of the winter time. The squirrel's summer nest, on the contrary, is light and airy, and it is made near the end of a bough, so that it swings about with the wind, and rocks like "the cradle on the tree-top." and there the mother-squirrel has her little ones: but if any one should try and climb the tree, she takes her little ones, one by one, in her mouth, and leaps from branch to branch and from tree to tree, till she is sure they are safe; but when the danger has passed, she takes them back again to her nest in the same manner.'

'How clever of the squirrel! I should like to see a squirrel jumping with a little squirrel in its mouth. May we go again to the wood? perhaps we may see the pretty squirrels again.





CHAPTER XIII.

THE SHIPWRECK-THE PARROT.

NE evening there was a great storm, although it was not autumn yet, which is the time for storms. The wind had been very high all the morning, and had become louder and more stormy as the day went by; and just before the children were going to bed, their grandmamma told them that she was very anxious, for such a stormy night would be, without doubt, dangerous to many

The noise of the wind was very great, and the doors and windows rattled and shook, and Alice asked—

ships now at sea.

'Is that loud noise the sea that we hear, grandmamma?' And her grandmamma told her it was; and when they listened they heard

the roar of the waves as they broke upon the shore, and they thought that they even heard the shingle rolling back with the heavy waves.

'Do not forget to add to your prayers tonight, "God bless all those at sea," my dear children; for there will be many who may stand in great need of God's merciful help to-night,' said grandmamma, as Alice and Beatrice bade her 'good-night.'

The two little girls went to bed, thinking much of their grandmamma's words, and did not forget to pray for 'all those at sea.' The noise of the storm at first kept them awake, but sleep came soon, and they forgot in sleep all their thoughts and fears.

Before breakfast the next morning the news was brought that a large ship had been thrown on the shore at Sidmouth during the night, but not a single life was lost.

The news was brought by the gardener, who had been in Sidmouth very early in the morning, and therefore grandmamma sent for him afterwards to come and tell her all he knew about the wreck.

'It is not much of a wreck,' the man said,

'for the ship has not had much damage. It was a special mercy of God that the moon had risen soon after midnight, so it was light; and the master of the ship knew the coast well, and knew, too, that unless he kept the schooner straight upon the town, it would go to bits on either side of it against our rocks. And so, in spite of the fury of the storm, he managed to steer her hard on to the shore, which is deep enough, you know, ma'am, at high water. The south-west wind helped to drive her on; but the men got frightened at last, and took to the boat as soon as they could see the Sidmouth lights, for they could not help fearing that the ship would go aground and break up.

'The crew, who rowed for their lives, had not reached the shore when they saw their ship come on past them with mighty force; and with the high tide she ran high and dry on to the parade, not far from the coastguard's station, where she is still.

'It is quite a wonder; and what a mercy that not a soul has perished! for the crew were soon thrown on the shore by the breakers; and though, of course, they were wet to the skin and worn out, yet they were all, thank God, safe.

'A number of the fishermen, who had been watching the ship some hours, and had waited for them, ran down and caught the boat just when a huge breaker had lifted it up, and would have torn both men and boat away back into the raging sea.'

The children asked how the fishermen were not afraid that those dreadful waves would carry them away too.

'The breakers would have done so, miss,' said John; 'but the men all held on to a stout rope fixed to the shore, and were able to keep their feet, holding by the boat at the same time, when the big breaker went clean over them, and thus it could not sweep them away.'

When grandmamma heard this, she told Alice and Beatrice that she should drive with them to Sidmouth and see the ship, and learn more about this wonderful coming on shore and merciful escape.

The two little girls were so glad, and talked of nothing but the ship and what they should see, as they drove over the hill to the town.

The carriage stopped at the hotel on the parade, and from there grandmamma and Alice and Beatrice walked till they came near the stranded ship, which looked such a huge monster out of the water.

A great crowd had collected round the ship, but they were allowed to pass and come much nearer. The sailors were running backwards and forwards, talking loud and telling everybody what a night they had had, how terrible the storm had been, and what they had done to save their lives.

A gentleman, a friend of grandmamma's, told her a great deal about the ship, and said that it had come from the eastern coast of Africa, round by the Cape of Good Hope, and that the sailors had brought with them numberless animals and curious articles, and they wished to sell them here; for they must now go by land to London, and could take but very little with them. The gentleman pointed at the same time to several small monkeys that were climbing up the ropes and rigging of the ship, and jumping about, and shrieking and chattering to the people below. They seemed very

happy at being loose, instead of shut up in cages, and to enjoy being safe and quiet instead of being tossed and thrown about upon those terrible rough waves.

Alice and Beatrice were lost in wonder, and were quite silent; they had never before seen so much that was new and strange to them, and here was so much to see.

Suddenly Alice called out, 'Grandmamma, do you see that beautiful bird? Pray look; what bird is it?'

And at the same time a sailor came up to them with a very fine parrot in a small cage. The parrot was grey and red, but its feathers were ruffled and wet, and the cage was so small that the poor parrot could hardly turn round.

'Will you buy a beautiful talking parrot?' said the sailor; 'he can say anything you like. Please, will you have it, ma'am? I will let you have it very cheap,' addressing the lady, as he saw that the two little girls had turned to her and were asking her to buy his bird.

Grandmamma agreed, and bought the bird for a small price, for the man told her that he should be so glad to get rid of it, as well as of



Grandmamma buys a Parrot saved from the Wreck .- Fage 125.



a pair of green paroquets which he would fetch from the ship.

The sailor then, putting the parrot in its cage into Alice's hand, disappeared among the crowd; and before many minutes had passed, the children saw the same sailor on the deck of the ship, and saw him let himself down to the ground by a rope, and soon come again towards them holding a small cage or box. In this were two much smaller birds, of slender shape, with long tails, and of the most beautiful green colour. Alice and Beatrice could scarcely express their joy when grandmamma bought them as well, saying, at the same time—

'These are love-birds, from Australia.'

The sailor looked, and said, 'Yes, that is their name, and they came from Sydney; but the parrot I got off the west coast of Africa.'

'Will you have a monkey too, ma'am? One of our men has several.'

'No, thank you,' said the lady; 'I have enough now, and am not fond of monkeys. But now we must go, dear children, first to Brown's shop, where I will get two proper cages for our new birds, for the poor creatures cannot move

in these. Can you carry the parrot, Alice? is it not too heavy for you?'

'No, not at all,' said Alice, a little proudly; 'I like to carry our parrot. May I hold the cage the whole way home?'

'Yes, if you like, my dear;' and they walked on to the shop, where grandmamma soon found a nice large cage for the parrot. It was of brass wire all round, and from the top hung inside a large wooden ring, in which grandmamma told the children parrots like always to sit and swing.

'What! like the squirrels on the trees, grand-mamma?' said Alice.

'Yes; I suppose it reminds them of the swinging branches of the trees in the country where they lived and flew about.'

'But where is their country?' asked Alice.

'In some part of Africa; in that hot country there are plenty of those gay-coloured birds. You know where Africa is on the map, and that it is one of the great divisions of the world?'

'Yes, I know that: Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Australia.'

'Quite right, my child. But though it is cruel and wrong to shut birds up in cages, now

that parrots have been brought away from their far distant home, and because it is much too cold for them to live and fly about in the woods in England, we must try and make our parrot and those pretty little love-birds as comfortable and as happy as we can.'

Another cage, a square one, was chosen for the love-birds, and seed was bought as well, at another shop, and then they drove home with their new live toys.

Grandmamma showed Alice how to strew sand on the board at the bottom of each cage, and where to put the seed and water for the birds' food; and when the cages were made ready, grandmamma opened the doors of the parrot's new and old cages, and putting the two cages quite close together, the children went a little way off and watched the parrot. First he looked at his new cage a short while with outstretched neck, till he saw the seed and water, when he suddenly hopped on to the open door, and then into the large cage, and began feeding and drinking eagerly at the seed and water, as if he had been very long without food, as most likely, during the storm, no one had had time to

attend to him, and the birds had been forgotten.

'If the ship had gone down our birds would have been drowned, would they not, grandmamma?' said Alice.

'Yes, dear Alice, they would; and, what would have been sadder, the poor men too, if God had not taken such care of them.'

'I am so glad,' said Alice, turning to the bird, 'that you were not drowned, you pretty parrot!'

The other cage was then placed next to the little box where the pair of love-birds were, and though they were more shy than the parrot, they made a rush into their house, and they seemed quite as hungry, for they began to eat immediately.

'We will leave the poor birds now alone a little, and get ready for dinner; and I dare say that my little girls will be nearly as glad of their dinners as the poor shipwrecked birds are.'

The children laughed, and said that they were very hungry, and they hoped that their new birds would soon feel happy in their nice large cages.

After dinner Alice and Beatrice went to see

their birds. The parrot was swinging in its ring; but though they spoke to it, and called it 'pretty Poll,' it neither spoke, nor moved, nor took notice of the children. They remained standing next the cage, and watched the bird long, and were very disappointed that this wonderful talking parrot could not, or would not, speak a word.

The little green love-birds seemed frightened when the little girls went near their cage, and flew about and fluttered, till Alice and Beatrice left them at their grandmamma's wish.

The next morning their first visit on going downstairs was to the birds. The parrot was swinging again on his ring, and the love-birds fluttered about; but Alice observed that they had eaten nearly all the seed, and that their feathers were dry and smooth and clean, and bright green, and the children said that they had never seen such beautiful birds before.

Grandmamma said to Alice, 'This morning you are late, and you must come to breakfast first; but another morning try and be ready a little earlier, and then you may give the birds fresh seed and water and clean sand before

breakfast. To-day Mary will show you how to do so.'

Alice ate her breakfast quicker than usual this morning, for she was apt to be slow, and to talk and to waste her time whilst dressing and whilst eating.

When both the little girls had finished their breakfast grandmamma told them to call Mary to feed the birds.

'May I take two bits of sugar, grandmamma?' said Beatrice.

'You may, dear; but be careful, for parrots bite sometimes; and you are a stranger to our parrot, and he may not like you.'

The parrot would not take any notice of the children, but swung backwards and forwards in his ring. Grandmamma told the children to ask Mary to place the two cages in the verandah where the sun was shining, for it was a fine sunny day, and grandmamma said that all birds except owls liked the sun.

Soon after the cages had been put in the verandah, and both the children were picking up and arranging their playthings, with their backs turned to the birds, they were suddenly startled by hearing a loud 'Good morning!' called out close behind them. Alice and Beatrice looked round to see who spoke so loud, when 'Good morning!' was repeated by the same voice. Beatrice was a little frightened, till Alice said, 'It is the parrot!'

They were so pleased. Beatrice ran to call grandmamma to come and listen to their talking parret, and Alice went closer to the cage, but not too close, for fear that she should frighten the parrot. She answered the parrot, and said, 'Good morning, pretty Poll!' and the parrot spoke again and again, and said, 'Good morning, pretty Bob!' When grandmamma came, Alice ran to her and told her, 'Our parrot talks' so nicely. I am so glad. But his name is not Poll, it is Bob; for when I said, "Pretty Poll," he answered, "Pretty Bob." And the parrot went on saying 'Pretty Bob' and 'Good morning' several times; and afterwards he began whistling and coughing, and seemed to wish to show the children all he could do and speak.

Beatrice jumped with joy, she was so happy that the parrot could talk, and it was a long time before they liked to leave the verandah. After dinner they took some bits of biscuit to their parrot, which he ate willingly from their fingers; but grandmamma reminded them to be careful still, 'for it may bite you when it snaps at its food.' Beatrice drew back her little hand, and was content to let Alice feed the parrot alone.

Alice tried every morning to be quicker in dressing herself, for she could now do everything for herself, except fastening her little dress behind; and when she was ready early, grandmamma let her feed and attend to the birds; but when she was late, Mary did it.

Alice liked to do it best herself; for the birds began to know her, and she was seldom late in the morning now. And every morning she gave the birds fresh seed in the little boxes, and clean water in the glasses, and put some sand or fine gravel on the board; and little Beatrice tried to help her as far as she could.



CHAPTER XIV.

THE KITTEN.

NE Monday morning, Mrs. Dunne, who had come down to fetch the linen for washing, sent Mary into the breakfast-room to ask if she might speak to the young ladies; and as grandmamma allowed, Alice and Beatrice went to speak to her.

Mrs. Dunne had a small basket in her hand, which she held out to little Beatrice, saying, 'My little Bessie has sent you a kitten, miss; for cook tells me that there is no cat in the house, and I hope that you will take this.'

Beatrice took the basket and lifted the lid, and she and Alice saw such a pretty little kitten lying curled up, half asleep. It was as white as snow, and had a blue ribbon round its neck. The kitten got up and stood in the basket ready to jump out; but Beatrice in her

delight seized it, and was going to run away with it, when Alice said—

'Wait, Beatrice, let me take it; you will frighten this dear little kitten.'

'But I want to show it to grandmamma,' said the little girl, turning back very unwillingly; 'let me take it, please Alice.'

'You may, only do not squeeze it,' said Alice.
Mrs. Dunne put the kitten nicely into
Beatrice's arms, and Beatrice stroked the kitten, and the little creature began to purr and
to rub its nose against Beatrice's hand.

'Thank you, Mrs. Dunne,' said Alice, 'please thank little Bessie, and tell her it is the prettiest kitten in the world.' And Beatrice said 'Thank you' too, and then both children went back to their grandmother to show her the kitten. Grandmamma admired it very much, and told Mary to bring some milk in a saucer for the kitten, and she did so. The kitten seemed very hungry, for it lapped the milk up in a very short time.

'I hope that pussy will not hurt the love-birds or your parrot,' said grandmamma; 'for cats like to eat birds.' 'Pussy must not eat our birds,' said Alice, 'or else we will send her back again.'

'But can we not teach the kitten not to go near the cages?' said Beatrice. 'The love-birds hang too high for her, I think; and if she goes to the parrot, he will peck Miss Pussy so hard with his sharp beak that she will not go near him again.'

'I am glad that we have a cat at last,' said grandmamma; 'for there are several mice in my storeroom, and yesterday I saw one in the dining-room, eating some of the seed Bobby had dropped on the carpet.'

'Mary says that there are mice in her pantry too, and cook told Mrs. Dunne that we wanted a cat very much in the house,' said Alice.

'Then it is a very good thing that we have this cat,' said Beatrice. 'What name shall we call the kitten, grandmamma?'

'As I hope that she will catch all our mice, shall we call her Mouser?'

'Oh yes, grandmamma. Mouser is such a pretty name for her; and Beatrice ran to her kitten, and called her 'Mouser' several times.

The kitten was sent into the kitchen during

the children's lessons; but as soon as these were over, Alice and Beatrice asked leave to go and fetch it, and after they had played with the cat some time, grandmamma told them they must go out for a walk.

Alice and Beatrice kissed their dear little puss, and bade her good-bye, and went out with Mary for their walk; and on their return, Mary went to her dinner, and the little girls played with Mouser up and down the gravel walk.

Alice, meanwhile, was running her hoop down some of the sloping walks, and liked especially to make her hoop hop down the stone steps of each of the different terraces. Alice was able to keep her hoop from falling, although she made it jump down every step; and she was very proud of doing this.

Wolf, the great dog, was chasing round and round the garden, now barking at some sparrows, and now at Alice's hoop; then Alice and Wolf had a race together, and when they both came to the gravel walk where Beatrice was playing with her kitten, Wolf gave a growl, and was going up to the cat, which was in Beatrice's arms; but Pussy was quicker than Wolf, for with one leap

she sprang up a tree close by, and was in the branches in a minute.

Beatrice gave a cry of fear, for Wolf had startled her by coming up so suddenly; and then his attack on her dear little kitten made her quite afraid, and, half crying, Beatrice began to scold Wolf, and to call him a very naughty dog.

Alice soon came up, and took hold of Wolf by the collar, for he was barking and jumping up at the tree where the kitten had taken shelter; but Wolf would not attend to Alice; and Beatrice was more frightened about her little cat, and began to cry. Grandmamma had heard the noise, and came running to help the children, and was soon able to make Wolf leave the tree. As soon as the dog was gone away, grandmamma went to the tree, and lifted down the trembling kitten, who seemed glad to take refuge in her arms.

Alice had called Wolf away; and little Beatrice followed grandmamma through the open window into the house, and was very glad to have her little Mouser safe indoors again.

'We must teach Wolf to be kind to pussy,'

said grandmamma to Beatrice, giving her the kitten to take upstairs.

'Please do, grandmamma,' replied Beatrice, ready to cry again; and she ran upstairs to take off her things, and to tell Mary all that had happened.

Grandmamma went back to Alice, who was standing quietly on the gravel walk with her hoop in one hand and holding Wolf by the collar with the other.

'You are a brave little girl,' said grand-mamma, 'and have kept Wolf in good order.'

Grandmamma then began to scold Wolf, and to talk to him; and the big dog locked wistfully into his mistress's face, as if he understood what she said.

'But come in now, my Alice; it is late, and dinner is waiting.' And they went indoors.





CHAPTER XV.

INSTINCT OF ANIMALS.

RANDMAMMA, will you tell me,' asked Alice one day, 'how the geese can know when bad weather is coming? Ellen Laurence told me that they knew.'

'They certainly do know, I believe, my dear Alice,' replied her grandmamma. 'God has given animals the instinct to foresee changes of weather.'

'But what is instinct?' inquired Alice.

'Instinct is a knowledge that comes of itself. It is a gift natural to animals, given, as I said before, by God; and thus animals know when storms and bad weather are coming, and when an earthquake is about to take place. Even dogs will try and give warning, when the house they live in is in danger of falling; and it is a

well-known fact that rats will desert a leaky ship, birds will not build their nests in a falling tree or any other dangerous place. I could tell you several stories of the instinct of animals.'

'Will you, then, tell us some stories about it, dear grandmamma?' said both the little girls.

Grandmamma thought a little, and then began as follows:—

'There was an old woman, who lived all alone in a very old cottage; she had a little dog, who was very fond of her, and always slept at the foot of her bed. One stormy evening in autumn the old woman was washing her feet in a tub close to the fire, before going to bed. The little dog ran out of the house and ran in again; at last he came up to the old woman, and barked at her, and whined, and then ran out of the house again. The old woman took no notice of her dog, but continued washing her feet; but the dog came in again, and looked uneasy and restless, and barked, and at length he took hold of the woman's dress with his teeth, and tried to pull her away. The old woman pushed him away, and gave him a little slap on his head, and told him to be quiet, and the dog ran out

again on to the road howling and whining; but he came backdirectly, and seemed quite furious, for he seized the old woman by her clothes, and pulled and tore, and looked so wild and strange, that his mistress took her feet hastily out of the water, put them into her slippers, and followed her dog through the open cottage door onto the road, to see what could be the matter. She had hardly reached the road when a dreadful loud noise made her turn round, and to her terror she saw that the chimney of her old cottage had fallen in and part of the roof; she looked through the still open door, and saw that her chair and tub had been crushed by the falling bricks and mortar, and she knew that she herself had been thus mercifully saved from being killed, thanks to the fidelity and instinct of her little dog.'

'What a nice story, dear grandmamma!' said Alice; 'and how clever the dog was! But will you tell us some more about the cleverness of animals? Are other animals as clever as dogs?'

'Yes, dear child, many instances are told of the sagacity or cleverness of other animals; but I think that dogs are the cleverest, for when people have been buried in the snow, dogs are sent to find them out.'

'Pray tell us how, grandmamma,' begged Alice.

'There are some very high hills or mountains in other countries, much higher than our hills here, which are nearly always covered with snow, and so cold that the snow is seldom melted. These mountains are called the Alps, and divide France and Switzerland from Italy. (You will remember, dear Alice, the chain of mountains you looked at in your map this morning.) Travellers who are obliged to cross these high mountains often lose their way in the deep snow, and at last get covered with snow, and they would die, and indeed often do die, in the snow and cold. On stormy and snowy nights, when travellers are exposed to greater danger, good men, monks, who live on those mountains, go out with a number of clever dogs in search of those people who may have lost their way. These dogs, by dint of scratching and smelling at the snow, are able to find out where the poor traveller has fallen, and has been buried by the snow. They bark whenever they find one, and the good monks come to their help, and dig out the half-frozen traveller, who otherwise must have died.'

After listening attentively, Alice said-

'How wonderful it is! I did not know that dogs were so clever and so useful.'

'But are cats as clever?' asked Beatrice.

'Cats are very knowing; but I do not think they have done so many clever deeds as dogs; and people think that cats do not love their masters or mistresses so much as dogs do.'

'But how did little Mouser know how to climb up the tree when Wolf came near her?'

'That knowledge was natural to her; she knew by instinct that a dog would hurt her, and therefore sprang up the tree as high as possible to be out of his reach.

'Wild animals are often much more knowing than those animals that live with us. A young horse that has not been driven long will find his way often much better in the dark than his driver; but an old horse, who has been used to obey the rein all his life, does not trouble himself about the road he is going, and goes wherever the rein guides him.'

- 'How very odd that is!' said Alice.
- 'I will tell you a little tale of one of my horses in Russia. It was about the end of April, I think, when the spring was beginning, and the winter just over. The snow was gone, and so was the ice on the rivers, except in some snug ditches, where ice was still to be found. You remember that I have told you that the winter in Russia lasts nearly six months.
- 'The grass was beginning to grow, the birds beginning to sing and to build their nests; but the roads were in a very bad state with soft mud and deep pools of water. Well, one evening about six o'clock, the bailiff's wife came to me, and told me that her brother-in-law, who lived in the valley close to the sea-coast, was very ill; and there were no doctors near, and I was accustomed to go and visit the sick, and give them medicine. So the woman begged me to go with her that evening to see the sick man.
- 'I asked her how we could go with such roads, and she said that if I would let her, she could drive one of my horses in her own little light cart, for no carriage would be safe.

A good horse was soon put to the cart, and I mounted the cart and let the woman drive me. We had six good miles to drive—down hill at first from very high ground (for I lived on a cliff that overlooked the sea), and then through a very wild forest and some wilder bush-land. The light cart and my willing horse took us safely there. I saw my patient and gave him the medicines he required, and then we began our drive home.

'But the daylight had faded, and it was nearly dark; we could not distinguish our road from several others that went in many directions across the wood. The bailiff's wife was frightened, and soon owned to me that she could not see to drive. But I was not uneasy, for I knew my horse; so I told her to leave the reins quite loose, and to let the horse take us home. She obeyed my order very unwillingly; and the horse, feeling his head quite free, made a sudden turn into the right road, for we were already on a wrong one, and from that moment we went safely on.

'We had to go through a small brook where the water was rather deep; the horse chose the safest road through the water, where the banks were the lowest; he took us over a rather dangerous ditch, where the boards that had served as a sort of bridge had been broken down in the winter, and were partly supported by some frozen earth and ice; and then, when we reached the firmer, better road, leading up the hill, my good horse trotted steadily till he brought us safe to my own house door.

'You may easily think that I ordered my horse a good supper of oats.'

'Oh, grandmamma, why did you not bring that nice horse here? We should have so liked to have him here.'

Grandmamma smiled and said, 'Dear Alice, that is so long ago, he cannot be alive.'

'Tea is ready, ma'am,' said Mary, opening the door.

'Tea!' said Alice; 'we have only just had dinner. How quickly the afternoon has gone! I do so like to listen to your stories, grandmamma; and look, I have finished hemming my tea-cloth. I thought before that it never would be done.'



CHAPTER XVI.

LENGTH OF DAY IN RUSSIA AND FINLAND.

HE autumn had come, and with it bad weather; storms and rain had come too; but Alice and Beatrice found the days pass always happily.

They were rarely prevented going out, at least for a short time, every day; for the broad terrace of the sunny garden was always dry; and there they played with their favourite dog and kitten, and ran up and down with them.

Wolf and Mouser had become good friends, and played together. When Wolf pretended to go to sleep, Mouser would creep up softly and slyly to him, and, putting out a soft paw, would lift one of the dog's ears; whereupon Wolf suddenly awoke, shaking his ears with a friendly bark; then Mouser scampered away and hid

behind a bush till Wolf passed, then she rushed out and leaped upon the dog's back, to Beatrice's great delight.

Wolf seemed fond of the playful kitten, and let her play with him, and even eat from the same plate.

Alice and Beatrice still ran races with their hoops up and down the broad gravel walk, down the sloping paths, and round the garden, and up again to the wide terrace.

Grandmamma was either walking in the garden or sitting at one of the windows over-looking it.

Indoors their pretty parrot was a never-failing source of pleasure to both the children.

The love-birds they did not care for much, and left them to their grandmamma.

The parrot now answered them when they spoke, and repeated all that the children had taught him. He imitated every sound he heard: he barked like Wolf, he mewed like the cat, he called 'cuckoo' like the clock; for in the diningroom there was a pretty German clock carved in black wood, where a little cuckoo came out of a little door in the clock, and called 'cuckoo'

as many times as the hour. One day he startled Beatrice by coughing like grandmamma, for she could not find out for a long time who it was that had coughed. Mary told her how frightened she had been one morning, on going into the dining-room, in the dark, to hear 'Who is there?' whispered so low, but so like some one speaking, that she was at first quite afraid. Sometimes the parrot tried to whistle a tune, which he had heard on board ship, no doubt, and he really did it very well.

The parrot liked the little girls to come and talk to him, and was very tame to them. He always greeted them when they came down to breakfast with a loud 'Good morning;' and he waited patiently for a piece of biscuit or sugar, which Beatrice never forgot to give him.

Whilst Alice attended to his food and cleaned out the cage, Beatrice opened the cage door, and the parrot came out, and hopped outside, and let Beatrice smooth down his pretty grey feathers, and he put his beak against her hand, but he never bit her little fingers.

'Grandmamma,' said Alice, 'you told me once that the days in Russia were so very long

in summer and so very short in winter. How much longer and shorter are they than our days here?'

'The longest day here in England, which is June the 21st, is reckoned to be sixteen hours and thirty-four minutes long. Now, can you reckon how much remains out of twenty-four hours for the night?'

'Oh, grandmamma, that is very difficult.'

'Well, then, I will tell you, seven hours and twenty-six minutes. Now in Russia, or I should better say in that part of Russia where I lived, the longest day was about nineteen or twenty hours long; and as there is a long twilight, which comes before the rising of the sun, and follows its setting, there is scarcely any darkness, and everybody can go to bed without a candle.'

'What is twilight, grandmamma?'

'Twilight is an uncertain second light, or a light that is something between sunlight and night.

'The peasants, or poor people, who work in the fields, rise with the sun in summer, and go to bed with it; but as the night is too short to rest them enough after their many hours of labour, they divide the day into three parts for their work, making a long rest from eight till ten for their breakfast, and from one to four or five in the afternoon for their dinner, and then work till quite late at night. They sleep generally once in the day, which is very necessary for them.

'One beautiful summer day, in the month of June, I crossed the Gulf of Finland, from Helsingfors to Revel, in a steamboat belonging to the Crown, which was much slower than a common passenger steamer, as all things belonging to the Russian Crown are very ill managed.

'Look at the map, my Alice, and you will see that Helsingfors lies more to the north of Revel; and thus the days there in summer are longer still, and the days in winter shorter, for the more north we go, the longer are the days in summer and shorter in winter.

'Helsingfors is a strange town, with narrow arms of the sea running into it and partly round it, so that the largest ships can come close to the quay or landing-place and to the streets. It is nothing but rock, not cliffs like ours here, but immense rounded lumps of granite, piled like monster stones one upon the other. No grass—nothing, in short, but moss can grow in the crevices; but the people are very industrious, and they have brought earth in their little boats, and have made gardens on the rocks, and planted flowers and shrubs. The spring is very late there, the winter very long; for the autumn comes early, so that the summer is very short. No corn can grow on that rocky coast; but stunted fir-trees manage to spring up in sheltered cracks and crevices, and force their roots between the rocks.

'Farther inland there is more earth and less rock: but little corn is grown in this cold country, and most of the corn for bread is brought over the sea to Finland, and in exchange the Finns sell salted fish and wood from the forests in the interior of the country; and splendid blocks and pillars of granite are sent to St. Petersburg from Finland.

'You would be amused if you could see the loaves of bread the Finns make during the summer for the whole year. These loaves are large flat rings, which are baked as hard as ships' biscuit. They are strung on poles, and in summer hang up outside the house in the sun, and in winter across the ceiling in the kitchen, and are used as they want them.'

'But how do the people eat this hard bread?'

'These rings are broken into small pieces, with a hammer, I believe, and are soaked in the soup or milk that they have.

'But I have forgotten that I was telling you about my crossing the gulf. Well, we left Helsingfors about six o'clock in the evening, and instead of reaching Revel at ten, we did not arrive there till between one and two in the morning. All the passengers remained sitting on deck the whole time; it was not dark any part of the time, but there was a strange soft light in the sky, which was delightful. As we approached Revel, which looks beautiful from the sea, and stands high, above a fine bay, the sun rose, which made it still more beautiful. There were but few passengers on board; and when we had landed, they dispersed quickly to their different homes near the harbour. I alone had to cross the whole length of the little old town to reach my home on the high hill or

cliff which forms part of the town, and overlooks the sea.

'A young Russian sailor shouldered my bag: my box was left at the custom-house to be examined, for no one beside the guard was awake there; and, followed by this man, I walked through the deserted silent streets, where cats and jackdaws and pigeons were enjoying their freedom undisturbed.

'It was a strange walk at that early hour of the morning, and pleased me much. I could not help thinking how little real care was taken of the sleeping town—not that it seemed necessary, spite of all the orders of its jealous, suspicious Emperor; for, only when I reached the square at the end of my long walk, I found two sentinels pacing up and down in front of the governor's house, and they were the first and only sign of that strict Russian care which the Emperor thinks he enforces throughout his large empire.

'How easily could any enemy have entered the sleeping town! and any one could have opened the unfastened doors and shutterless windows of each silent house; but there is one comfort in that part of the country, robberies and housebreaking are not known, and my doors and windows were never fastened even in the long dark nights.'

'But there are no robbers here?' asked Alice, anxiously.

'No, my dear child; in beautiful Devonshire, at least in this part of it, we are as safe as in the Baltic provinces, where Revel lies.'





CHAPTER XVII.

PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE MAKE ALL THINGS EASY.



HEN will Christmas come?' asked Alice one morning, instead of attending to her sum.

'Christmas will come very soon, Alice, but you must think of your sum now,' said grandmamma. 'I cannot talk to you about anything till your lessons are over.'

'Please, grandmamma, tell me first how many weeks there are till Christmas?' asked Alice.

'Attend to your sum, Alice,' repeated her grandmamma. But Alice instead of obeying began to cry, and said—

'I cannot do this sum, it is so difficult.'

'Bring your slate here;' and Alice did so, and grandmamma said, 'What is difficult?—show me.'

- 'I do not know what nine times seven are?'
- 'Not know what nine times seven are? Think a little, dear child; you know it well, because you said your multiplication of nine to me only yesterday. What is seven times nine?'
- 'Seven times nine are sixty-three; but I want to know what nine times seven are?'
 - 'The same thing—sixty-three!'
- 'So it is;' and Alice laughed, but soon began to cry again; and when grandmamma asked her what was the matter now, she only sobbed the more, and could not speak at first. At last she said with many a sob, 'I cannot learn this long piece of poetry, and do these three sums, and learn my spelling, in time to go out with you this morning.'
 - 'Why not, my little girl?' said grandmamma, gently. 'I have never seen you shed a tear over your lessons before.'
 - 'Because—because—' and Alice began to cry again.
 - 'Crying will not help you, Alice; wipe away those naughty tears and listen to me.
 - 'I know that you did not begin your lessons when I told you, for you remained talking to

your parrot, and lost some time. But if you make haste and begin, and if you do not cry, you will do them easily. Look at the clock; you see that you have two hours, for I am not going out till twelve; now try and waste no more time.

'But you must not try to do all at once, or even to think of all at once; begin and do each in its turn. Learn your piece of poetry first, and think only of that; and when you know it, look at the clock, but not before, and see how long you have been, then take your two other sums, and do them without looking off your slate. Your spelling will not take you long.

'Try and do exactly as I tell you, and let no tears fall on your book or slate.'

Alice smiled, and giving grandmamma a kiss, sat down with her book in hand, and in less than half an hour she had learnt three verses of her piece of poetry by heart. She then took her slate, saying to herself, 'I like to do sums, and so does grandmamma,' and one by one she did them, then proved them right, all but one figure in the last, it was always wrong. 'I shall never be ready,' said the little girl again; but on second thoughts she resolved to try, and in a few

minutes she found out her mistake, and now all the sums were right.

Her spelling was quite easy; she had only to read the words over twice, and she knew them all. And when she looked at the clock, Alice saw that she had been but little more than one hour; and taking her books and slate, she ran full of joy to her grandmamma.

'I am ready, grandmamma; I have finished everything. I know my lessons; may I say them to you now? I am so glad I did as you told me.'

'I too am very glad, my dear child,' said her grandmamma, kissing her tenderly.

Alice then said her lessons extremely well, and her sums were praised. Then her grand-mamma said, 'You must never think of how much you have to do, without remembering how much time you have to do it in.'

From this time little occurred to tell of; but the little girls were very happy, and liked to stay with their grandmamma in the country still, although the storms of autumn had stripped the trees of their leaves, and the winter was coming on, and the garden had no flowers or fruit. The sun, however, still shone bright, and the weather still was very mild; and they were able, nearly daily, to take longer walks than in the summer, and go much farther among the pretty valleys and high hills of Devonshire, and they learned to love their grandmamma's pretty home more and more.

The two little girls looked forward to Christmas with great delight, for it was to bring their dear mamma to them.

Alice and Beatrice bid their little readers now good-bye, wishing them as happy a Christmas as they hope to have themselves.



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